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THE GUARDIANS
AND MAVERICKS
OF MANILA
AFTER DARK
A NIGHTLIFE PORTFOLIO

THE LIBERATION OF
HEART

THE SENATOR'S WIFE ON LEAVING SHOWBIZ AND WHY SHE'S NOT CAMPAIGNING FOR CHIZ

LAST ORDER AT BURGOS

*THE LONG, SLOW GOODBYE OF
MAKATI'S RED LIGHT DISTRICT*

THE OTHER BOUVIER SISTER

*A PRIVATE AUDIENCE WITH
PRINCESS LEE RADZI WILL*

ROGUE MAGAZINE / 250 PESOS



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COVER STORY



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On the Cover

Heart Evangelista wears a **Joseph** double cashmere Lisa longcoat and **Float** swimsuit

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Hair by Jerry Javier

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THE EDITOR'S NOTE

December-January 2016

The Yellow Brick Road

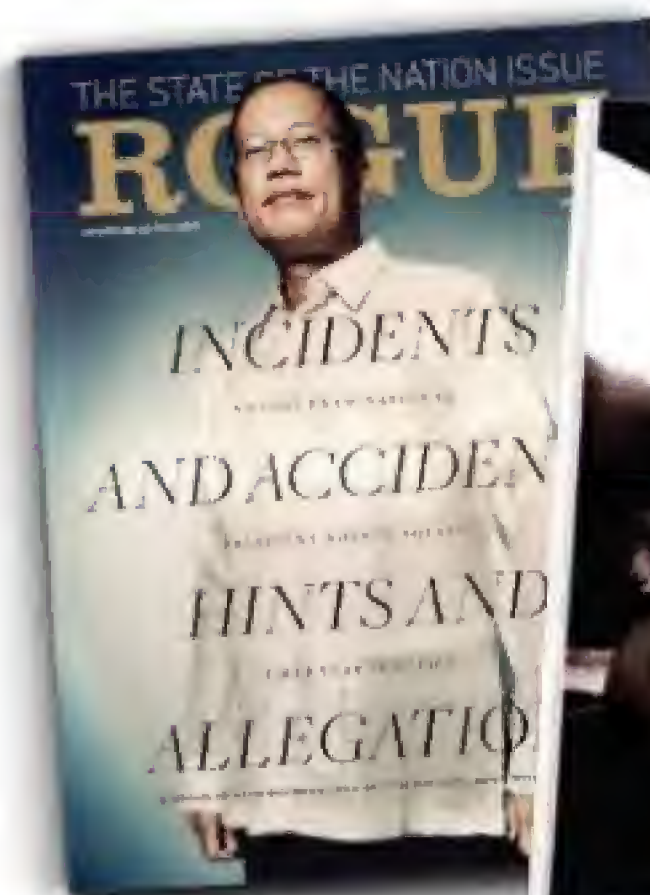
There could not have been a *Rogue* cover subject more polarizing than President Benigno Aquino III. Six years ago, when the then-senator was photographed by *Rogue's* portraitist Steve Tirona during the dwindling days of the 2010 campaign season, the presidential frontrunner cut somewhat of an awkward figure with his loose *piña barong*, baggy trousers, and balding crown.

But he was, despite a lack of brash and swagger, very much the man of the moment, an incorruptible architect of change who was, if the opinion polls were to be believed, poised to take the reigns of the republic in just a matter of weeks.

On a bold whim, we decided to run Tirona's photograph on the cover of our annual State of the Nation Issue. As I had expected, the image irked as much as it impressed, and initiated conversation both online and off. For a magazine that had become synonymous with the Philippines' most beautiful women, it was a big risk to have a 50-year-old bachelor, even if he was the Head of State, be the face of *Rogue* for a full month on the newsstands.

There was, of course, another reason for the swell of lusty "oohs" and "boos." A year into Aquino's administration, the body politic was still sharply divided; many continued to question the capabilities of the country's new Chief Executive and emotions still ran high over the outcome of the elections.

If the circus that is Philippine politics has taught me anything in the last three decades, it's that a change in regime is rarely gentle. For many of those in my generation born during the sunset years of the Marcos dictatorship and Martial Law, their first brush with this dirty business of mantle-



passing was the 1986 EDSA Revolution.

It didn't matter whether your fingers flashed a defiant "L" or a compliant "V," or whether you sported an armor of yellow or a shield of red when you stormed the streets to rally for the leader of your choice. No matter what side of the fence you were on, two things were clear: Filipinos from all walks of life were scared shitless about their future, and there was, undeniably, a sense of real change in the air.

I felt this as a child in 1986. I felt this again as a young man in 2000, when President Joseph Estrada was overthrown in a second wave of People Power and succeeded by another embezzler corrupted by her own ambition. But I understood this feeling most profoundly only six years ago.

The 2010 presidential campaign season was one of the most exhilarating episodes of my life. For close to seven months leading to the May 10 elections, my paternal cousins, extended relatives, and I painted the town yellow and blue as

we campaigned for the tandem of Aquino and his running mate, Mar Roxas, in the south of Manila.

The experience, one so removed from my role as the editor of this magazine, gave me a glimpse of the world of public service, in the most noble sense of the term. Beyond the provincial sorties and the private fundraisers, the TVC shoots and the T-shirt drives, the ribbon-stickering and the ballot-watching, the inimitable thrill of those seven months was seeing the working belly of southern Luzon through the eyes of its people, all cast in a new light: the proud glow of patriotism.

That season is upon us again, and I certainly hope our people will be cast in the same spell.

Paolo Reyes
PAOLO R. REYES
Editor in Chief

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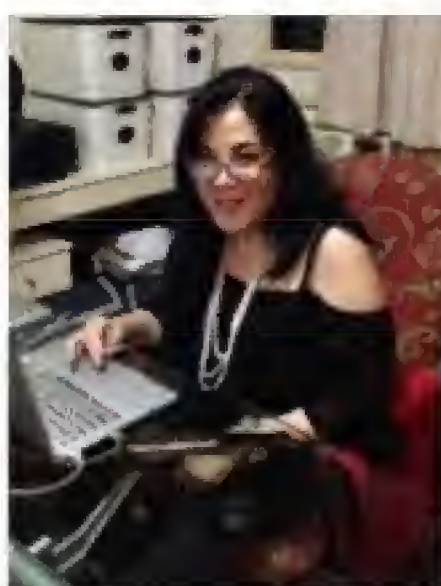
My DIAMOND

THE GUEST LIST

December 2015-January 2016



Margaux Salcedo is author of the food column "First Class" published Sundays in the business section of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. A former news anchor and Ateneo Law alum, she works as a communications consultant specializing in political campaigns and crisis management when not too busy eating. She was spokesperson for the presidential campaign of former President Joseph Estrada in 2010.



Lizza Guerrero Nakpil grew up gazing at Luna's *Parisian Life*. This may account for her inordinate interest in all things Belle Epoque and a morbid fixation on the Philippine Revolution and its consequence, the Philippine-American War. By day, she is an art and auctions consultant; by night, a rock-band manager and concert promoter. Go figure.



Patrick Paez is the head of news production at TV5 and oversees the online show *Kontrabando*. His latest program conception is what he calls a weekend newscast in the form of a quiz/gag show called *Barangay Utakan*. Before turning network executive, Paez was a field guy covering politics, disasters, and the fighting in Mindanao and Afghanistan.



Nicky Haslam is an interior designer and the founder of NH Design Inc. Aside from having been a contributing editor for both *British Vogue* and *Tatler*, he has also written reviews for *The World of Interiors* and *The Spectator*. His latest book, *Nicky Haslam: A Designer's Life*, was published this year.



Paolo Enrico Melendez is an awarded writer known for his satirical short fiction. His books, the novella, *fi(Θ)rs*, and its companion short story collection, *An Abbreviation Which Means Sameness Without End*, are due for release this year. He is from Tanauan, Batangas.



Artu Nepomuceno finished his education in AB Photography at the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde. To support himself, he founded an Ice Cream Sandwich shop called Louie-Luis, managing this establishment while shooting for publishing gigs. The earliest recorded instance of him using a camera was when he was five years old, taking photos of animals at a zoo somewhere in Europe.



JL Javier is a freelance photographer. He graduated with a degree in Information Design from Ateneo de Manila University. He primarily takes portraits, but also likes to shoot fashion and travel. His inspirations include the photography of Richard Avedon, the paintings of Rembrandt, and his dog Jeffrey.



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AGENDA

FOOD + ENTERTAINMENT + CULTURE + TRAVEL

ISSUE NO.

94

WHISKY

BUSINESS

WORDS BY MIGUEL ORTEGA

Japanese whiskey bar LIT brings back the long-lost art and discipline of bartending, one founded on elegance and precision





PHOTOS BY GABBY CANTERO

“TO TEND THE bar is not just to create drinks. It has to be done with elegance and style—how to shake, what kind of tools to implement.”

This is how my first Japanese bar experience started: with a lesson from Francis Hasegawa, one of the owners of LIT (*Serendra, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; 832-1600*) and its whiskey and spirits concierge. I learned that when the age of prohibition struck America, this brought with it the demise of the Golden Age of bartending in the US. With alcohol outlawed, bartenders fled to other places to find work, seeking refuge in the inebriated streets of Europe, while others took off to the East. In Japan, Yokohama and Kobe became the new home of American bartending.

The Japanese tea ceremony, while seemingly complex, has a simple premise: sharing a beverage with companions while shut off from the rest of the world. Its foundations root themselves in the old world, which naturally influenced the burgeoning bartending scene, turning the Japanese approach to bartending into a meticulous and stylized craft, rooted in hospitality. At LIT, if you look closely enough, the crystal glasses, the hand-carved ice, the special tools, and even the charcoal-decanted water, all exude a certain type of dedication to the craft—a lifelong one.

“People just dedicate their lives to pursuing what they like the most and try to study more, learn more, attain more. The satisfaction is that you are improving and getting closer to what

At LIT, the crystal glasses, the hand-carved ice, and the charcoal-decanted water all exude a certain type of dedication to the craft—a lifelong one.



THE GLASS MENAGERIE

From left: Suntory's Yamazaki Limited Edition 2015 is composed of three single malts and was aged 20 years in sherry casks made for maturing red wines; LIT's Manila Old Fashioned with Nikka from the Barrel. **Above:** LIT boasts an expansive selection of bottles, which is essential for Hasegawa to prepare his acclaimed whiskey flights.

you are aiming at,” Hasegawa explains. But satisfaction also comes from the customers. The term *omotenashi* refers to Japanese hospitality; finding what the customer needs before it is needed. This customer-centric philosophy ties closely with the trust required in an *omakase*, or

the need for mutual trust. The bartender must be skilled enough to deliver the best drink, while the customer must have a certain level of understanding in order to appreciate the drink. This, it seems, is what Hasegawa is all about: education. “We are still the only place in Manila that carves our ice. I wouldn't mind people imitating that. At least you have to get started. And if you want the basics, I wouldn't mind sharing it.”

Two hours later, I finally receive the menu, which doubles as an encyclopedia filled with details about whiskey. It's a sign that they know what they're doing, and Hasegawa walks me through it, page by page. But it doesn't matter. He's already selected what I'll be imbibing in the minutes that follow: a whiskey flight consisting of four types he hand-picked. He pours each shot with grace and precision and then, strangely, he walks away, leaving me to my drinks. I sit there savoring each glass, trying to figure out what he told me previously about this selection. We're done talking, yet somehow it's as if the conversation never really ended. ■

Fall with Bally

Inspired by Wes Anderson's distinct style of visual storytelling, Bally's Fall/Winter menswear collection aims to emulate that same attention to detail

IN 2001, Wes Anderson introduced cineastes to the 70s inspired world of *The Royal Tenenbaums*—his inclination toward symmetry and neatness was apparent and its influence was far-reaching. Fourteen years later, the retro style of *The Royal Tenenbaums* manifests in Bally's latest collection. The brand reimagines classic staples influenced by Margot Tenenbaum's weasel coat, Richie Tenenbaum's camel suit, and Royal Tenenbaum's turtleneck. The result is an iconic—one might even go as far as to say cinematic—Fall/Winter 2015 menswear collection.

However, Wes Anderson's aesthetic isn't the only look permeating this line. It also includes suede and leather jackets, inspired by Steve McQueen, Robert Redford, and Peter Fonda for a simultaneously sporty and dapper look. Rounding off Bally's Fall/Winter look is its shoe collection, which update classics.

The Swiss label's latest collection boasts of its Oakwell hightops and Tourist sandals and updates to their classic hiking boots, Heimberg sneakers, and the more formal Scribe Novo and Swiss Moccasin. Meanwhile, the Summer Spring Crescent Toile bag collection gets a revamp for the new season. Bally utilizes earthier hues for these recent pieces as well as rich leather and soft fabrics for its accessories.

Bally proves that there is no need to sacrifice comfort for aesthetics. With over 160 years of dedication to perfection under its belt, the brand stays true to their principles of modern, innovative, and functional fashion. It creates each piece from fine, lightweight materials that, just like a frame from a Wes Anderson film, invoke an undeniable sense of symmetry between style and function.



Though Bally's pursuit of sartorial excellence has branched out to fabrics and accessories, the Swiss brand's main expertise remains to be the production of world-class footwear.

DOWN TO A SCIENCE

In Allium, Chef Mark Tan translates the pleasures of his travels—from Japan to New York—into a degustación with a thousand stories to tell

WORDS BY MICHELLE V. AYUYAO
PHOTOS BY SAM LIM



AN ALLIUM REFERS to the bulb that fruits beneath the earth, at the base of a plant—chives, scallions, leeks, shallots, onions, garlic. Though humble in appearance, an allium's textures and tastes can vary when cooked in certain ways. Eaten bare, an onion breaks with a crunch, and peppers the mouth with its spice. When simmered on a butter-lined skillet, it loses its intensity and becomes a saccharine, meaty jelly.

Chef Mark Tan's Allium, like the troupe of vegetables it takes its name from, puts heavy emphasis on seeing through the varied layers of a single ingredient. Tan, though backed by a culinary backdrop that spans being classically trained at The Kitchen Academy in LA—and working the kitchens of Providence, Bazaar by Jose Andres, and Eleven Madison—made the conscious decision not to zero in on just one cuisine. Here, there is weight on pushing the



SPRING BULB

From top: The tuna carpaccio is only available depending on the availability of the fish Chef Mark Tan prefers; the Allium chef has trained in Michelin-starred restaurants such as Providence, The Bazaar, and Eleven Madison.

boundaries of flavor that a lone element has the capacity of bearing.

Though most restaurants of this caliber offer dishes à la carte or as a set, Allium (G/F Grand Midori, Bolanos St., Legaspi Village, Makati City; 519-1088) sets itself apart by providing two degustacións: a four-course Market Menu and a grandiose 10-course Cart Blanche. The latter is almost like a dare to the willing, with its indulgent number of dishes and threats of drink pairings (nope, not just wine) looming in the near future.

The Market Menu lists itself like a choose-your-own-adventure story, with an introduction that begins with chilled starter options like bluefin tuna with pickled chanterelles or lobster salad with Hokkaido urchin. The idea here is that you build your meal, course by course, according to your preference. Hot starters lend

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The Market Menu lists itself like a choose-your-own-adventure story—beginning with chilled starter options like bluefin tuna and pickled chanterelles or lobster salad with Hokkaido urchin.

themselves out in bites of wild mushroom ragout and buttermilk fried oysters with yuzu, as well as gold nuggets of crispy sweetbreads on a brown butter sauce that tastes like a spicy butterscotch syrup.

Tan's entrees are more telling of his culinary past, with familiar tastes of duck confit and braised veal cheeks maintaining their characteristic qualities. The desserts are surprisingly jaunty, one of them an ode to his brief stint at New York's Le Bernardin through a Laiskonis Egg. Hollowed-out eggshells are filled with a decadent chocolate pot de crème, caramel, and flakes of Maldon salt.

In spite of turning to other cultures for the flavors they create, Allium abides not just by one cuisine; rather, it fuses a multitude into a complete dining experience. Chef Tan's dishes are an amalgamation of contradictions, where classic culinary traditions and tastes are heightened by innovative technique. ■

ALL LAID OUT
Clockwise, from top left: Giant prawn, uni and lardo; Brittany lobster bique, crème fraîche, and espelette; most of the tables in Allium accommodate groups of people, perhaps suggesting that the degustación's several courses are best enjoyed with company.





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IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL

Set in the sex-charged and drug-fueled 70s, Terence Winter's *Vinyl* zeroes in on the dark side of the music industry

WORDS BY MIGUEL ORTEGA

SEX AND DRUGS will forever fall short without the company of rock 'n' roll. It's the unholy trinity that turned rock into big business. *Vinyl*, HBO's upcoming drama, confirms this, attempting to reveal the intensity, madness, and excess behind the music industry of New York in the 70s.

Terence Winter, the show's creator, together with executive producers Martin Scorsese, who also directed the pilot, and Rolling Stones's Mick Jagger, form a reassuring trio. Winter is the creator of *Boardwalk Empire* and worked as the screenwriter for Scorsese's *Wolf of Wall Street*. And Jagger, as the front man of the most popular, rebellious band in the world, ensures a certain level of authenticity—which the trailer has already proven. "That's rock 'n' roll: it's fast; it's dirty; it smashes you over the head," the voice in the trailer exclaims amidst fast cuts of guitars, money, drugs, and violence.

Vinyl stars Bobby Cannavale as Richie Finestra, a record executive for American Century. It also stars Olivia Wilde as Finestra's wife and Ray Romano as his right hand man. Set during the rise of punk and disco, the show

follows Finestra as he attempts to discover the next sound in the music industry. The ensemble is rounded off with Juno Temple, Max Casella, Jack Quaid, P.J. Byrne, and J.C. MacKenzie. James Jagger, Mick's son, appears as the front man of the band the show centers on. (The Temptations were right: papa was, indeed, a Rolling Stone.)

The show has been in the works for years and was picked up by HBO late last year. This is the television network's first attempt at creating dramas revolving around the music industry, although there have been others similar ventures such as Fox's *Empire*, which delves into hip-hop, and ABC's *Nashville*, which tackles country music. Regardless, *Vinyl*'s strength comes from the era—this was the time when bands transitioned from playing in clubs to touring the world in their own jets and performing in sports arenas. Blessed with the combined storytelling prowess of Scorsese and Winter, and their fascination for the lives of powerful people, viewers can expect the show to deliver Rolling Stones-level satisfaction. ■

I'M WITH THE BAND

Above: Bobby Cannavale plays Ricky Finestra, a record executive trying to navigate his way through New York's glamorous, hedonistic rock 'n' roll culture.

Seven Digits

From the minds behind *Ocean's Thirteen* comes a drama fixated on the politics of big business

Showtime will unveil their new drama in January and it's about money—lots of it. *Billions* was created by screenwriters Brian Koppelman and David Levien, both responsible for *Ocean's Thirteen*, together with Andrew Ross Sorkin, author of *Too Big to Fail*. The show revolves around the intricate power play between US Attorney Chuck Rhodes, (Paul Giamatti) and hedge fund mogul Bobby Axelrod (Damian Lewis). It explores the extent of capitalism and the lengths which people in power are willing to go in order to keep their place in the world.



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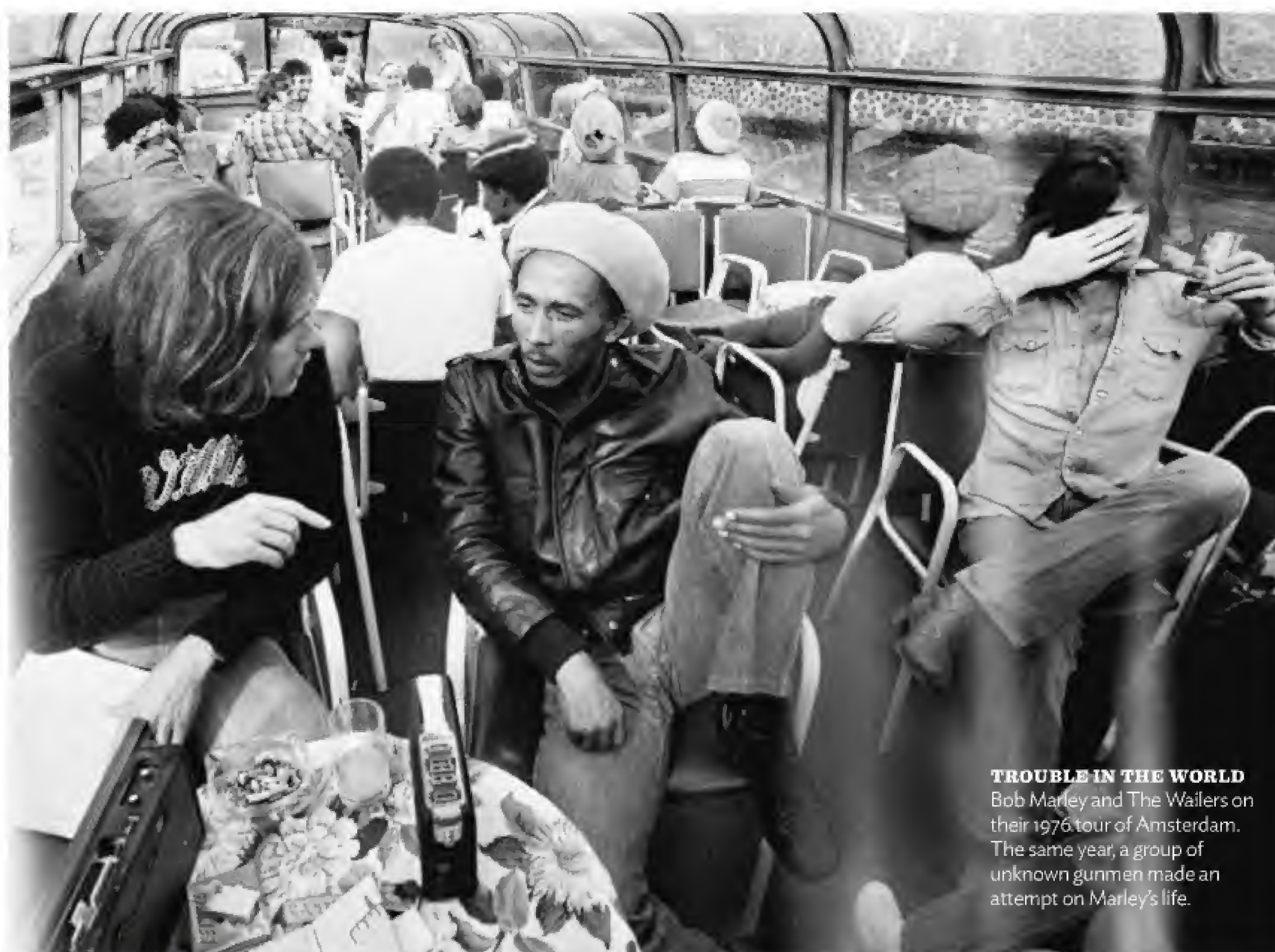
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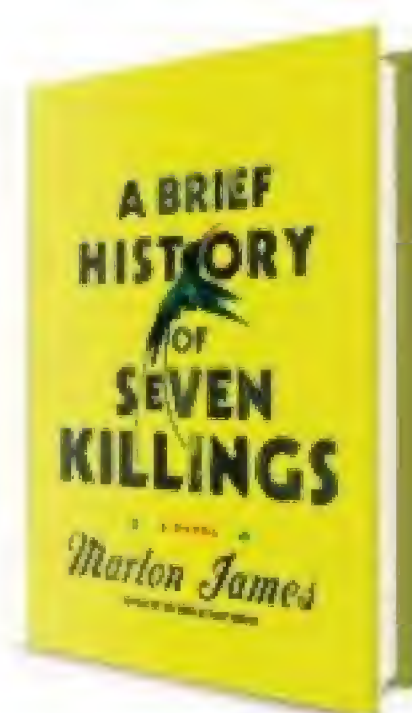
MURDER THEY WROTE

A Brief History of Seven Killings, winner of the 2015 Man Booker Prize, examines Jamaica's social unrest through the assassination attempt on Bob Marley

WORDS BY ALDRIN CALIMLIM



TROUBLE IN THE WORLD Bob Marley and The Wailers on their 1976 tour of Amsterdam. The same year, a group of unknown gunmen made an attempt on Marley's life.



TIME AND INTRIGUE

Though the coordinated attempt on Marley's life may be the event that initially draws readers in, it is not the novel's central theme. The true stroke of Marlon James's brilliance is his ability to use the assassination attempt as a jumping point to examine other situations of violence and political unrest, some of which take place in different decades.

BEWARE THE LENGTHY novel that begins with a dramatis personae, for you may run the risk of constantly trying to remember who's who as you progress, if not plod, through it. But then again, if the novel in question is anything like this year's winner of the Man Booker Prize, the payoff may far outweigh the risk.

A Brief History of Seven Killings is a not so brief history of at least seven killings told in about 700 pages involving more than 77 characters. More than the numbers, though, there are the voices. Influenced by William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, the book delivers streams of consciousness from multiple unreliable narrators with distinct language patterns, ranging from the crude patois of ghetto gang members to the journalese of a magazine reporter to the eloquent commentary of the ghost of a politician deceased by defenestration. But for all their heterogeneity, these trains of thought, epiphanies, and recordings of reactions produce a symphony rather than a cacophony of voices. And as well they should, inasmuch as a legendary musician figures largely in the novel.

Written by Marlon James, the first ever

Jamaican to win the Man Booker Prize, *Brief History* leads off in the late 1970s with the real-life murder attempt by unknown gunmen on the Jamaican reggae superstar Bob Marley. It then proceeds to imagine the brief and thunderous lives lived by the would-have-been assassins within and outside Jamaica. Effectively it presents an unsparing exploration of the violent ideological transformation of the island country—plagued by too much ism and schism, populated by people who are trying to fly out lest they be rubbed out—during the couple of decades following the pivotal incident. Out of that local event, too, James composes a myth of global proportions concerning both the brutality and sublimity of human existence.

"The problem with a book is that you never know what it's planning to do to you until you're too far into it," says one of the book's narrators. But in *A Brief History*, it's not so much a problem as a ruse to keep you reading until you're down to the last word on the last page and the realization hits like a bullet to the brain: we, the cast of characters of this world are all under death's sentence. ■

The Winners Circle

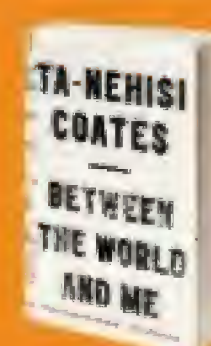
We pass judgment on two of this year's most critically acclaimed books



All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR FICTION

Overwritten and overrated, *All the Light We Cannot See* is likely to be turned into an Oscar bait movie. Two teenagers on opposite sides of World War II, a blind French girl and an orphaned Hitler Youth member, ultimately have an encounter if for no other reason than to evoke the obligatory themes of hope and redemption. There's even a supposedly symbolic MacGuffin in the form of a coveted precious stone called the Sea of Flames thrown in for good sentimental measure.



Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR NONFICTION

Inspired by James Baldwin's epistolary essay collection *The Fire Next Time*, *Between the World and Me* is written by Coates as a letter to his son about the dangers attendant on black life in America. The book considers its points within the larger concern of the fear of a parent for his child. It's this fear that makes it reminiscent of another book about a father and his son living in a climate of uncertainty and hostility, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. Except Coates's work depicts the all-too-real here and now.



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THE LAST LAYER

Though artist Ian Fabro's works are, at least on the surface, intentionally ambiguous, his depictions of obscured forms hint at the overwhelming emotions of the everyman

WORDS BY MIO BORROMEIO
PHOTOS BY JOSEPH PASCUAL

PEELING BACK THE PIECES

Above: Ian Fabro's home studio also doubles as his mood board, with walls plastered with printouts of paintings by the likes of Henry Fuseli and Francisco Goya.

IAN FABRO IS a man of few words. You can tell this by the way he refuses to give titles to the pieces that he finishes for exhibition; the titles that do appear are often provisional, issued by Fabro's curator.

"I don't read a lot. I was never good with words; visuals talk to me more than words. To me, my works will always remain untitled," he says. A glance at his latest work is all one needs to confirm this predilection. Layer upon layer, Fabro's collages overwhelm the viewer with divergent elements—gleaming gun tacker wires, vague blemishes of mood, and imposing black frames containing each image. Works like these signal a new phase in Fabro's oeuvre, a move away from the zone of the familiar.

At the age of 12, Fabro was busy entering editorial cartooning competitions. The subjects of his works at the time were universally recognizable. He mentions media killings, coups

d'état, and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's attempts for charter change. It was through these cartoons that Fabro realized his affinity for pen and ink, his preferred medium.

He developed his personal style under the tutelage of University of the Philippines professors, who gave him both the background in art history necessary for inspiration and the room to experiment with new materials. "I think the Spanish masters, the symbolists, and the expressionists influenced me the most," he recalls.

Fabro then tried his hand at collage and assemblage, which enabled him to organize his drawings into more complex ideas. But finding different ways to put his drawings back together, the artist discovered the ingenuity of staples. "At first I got attracted to it because it looks like medical stitches. Then as I explored this medium, I started using it in more complex ways than just a connecting element for my drawings."



A WORLD OF HURT

From left: The works of the artist are not completely two-dimensional, as various cutouts are layered and stapled together to form each piece; *The cold Earth slept below*, above the cold sky shone, mixed media, 84" x 30".

Fabro's collages overwhelm with divergent elements—gleaming gun tacker wires, vague blemishes of mood, and imposing black frames containing each image.



With these elements, Fabro discovered a way to successfully express complex moods, emotions, and states of mind, his central thematic interests. The pieces of his most recent exhibit, *Hurt Anatomies*, reveal a multitude of bodies tumbling over patterns of staples from which separate shapes emerge. It is hard to pin down exactly what he wants us to feel, but that may be beside the point.

While the style of *Hurt Anatomies* opened the door for more possibilities to confront the viewer, Fabro felt the urge to experiment once again. His post-*Anatomies* pieces, part of a Berlin group show called *Wasak! Filipino Art Today* this month, are a series of paper-cut collages. "The drawings are less detailed or ripped in a way that is not going to be representational. The compositions are more unplanned." With the gun tacker wires that replace his signature staples, he no longer intends to connect elements, but obscure them.

The semblances of the human form detectable in his new work are merely suggested. Nothing is clear, but that is the objective. He has made an image that cannot, will not, should not find words to capture it. ■



WELCOME TO THE BADLANDS

Alejandro Iñárritu's much-awaited homage to the American Western, *The Revenant*, is a tale of vengeance and betrayal told in blood

WORDS BY VINNY TAGLE

FRESH FROM HIS OSCAR WIN, Alejandro Iñárritu takes his latest movie away from the backstages of theaters and into the wild American frontier. *The Revenant* stars Leonardo DiCaprio as Hugo Glass, a fur trader in the early 1800s who is attacked by a bear and gets robbed and left for dead by his companion, John Fitzgerald (Tom Hardy). When Glass recovers, he finds that Fitzgerald also killed his adopted Native American son, sending him on a journey to exact his revenge.

Whereas *Birdman* was a heavily stylized depiction of an aging actor's comeback, realism seems to be the defining trait of *The Revenant*. Iñárritu's insistence on using natural lighting and conditions as well as on shooting the movie chronologically demonstrate his desire to convey the rawness and ferocity of the American territories—even at the expense of the well-being of the cast and crew, if reports are to be believed. Glass isn't just on a quest to avenge the death of his son; he also embodies the frontiersmen's ethos of taming the violent landscape as well as his tumultuous inner life.

The director's latest pet theme seems to be middle-aged men finding and interrogating what gives their life purpose and meaning, and his Glass is a redeployment of a classic trope in American cinema: that of a troubled man fueled by vengeance to hand justice and bring some order to the lawlessness of the wild. What better genre is there to tell this story than a Western? ■

NO FRONTIER

Leonardo DiCaprio stars in *The Revenant*, a film now famous for its on-set problems and its use of only natural light for its scene photography.

SMOKING GUNS

We round up two upcoming Westerns dead set on redefining the genre's conventions and testing its limits



The Hateful Eight

Quentin Tarantino conjures a new group of characters in this frenetic Western filled with betrayal and hoodwinking set in the snowy mountains of Wyoming where eight strangers try to work together to get to Red Rock for reasons of their own. Usual Tarantino collaborators such as Samuel L. Jackson, Tim Roth, and Michael Madsen make up the cast.



Jane Got a Gun

Natalie Portman is front and center as Jane Hammond, a woman who has to turn to her ex-fiancé Dan (Joel Edgerton) after her husband Ham (Noel Emmerich) gets murdered by a rival gang. In a reversal of roles, a woman leads the action in this new Western. Despite the delays in the release, the promising cast and script make this a film to watch out for.

CHRIS NICHOLAS
Inspired by the future



ALDO

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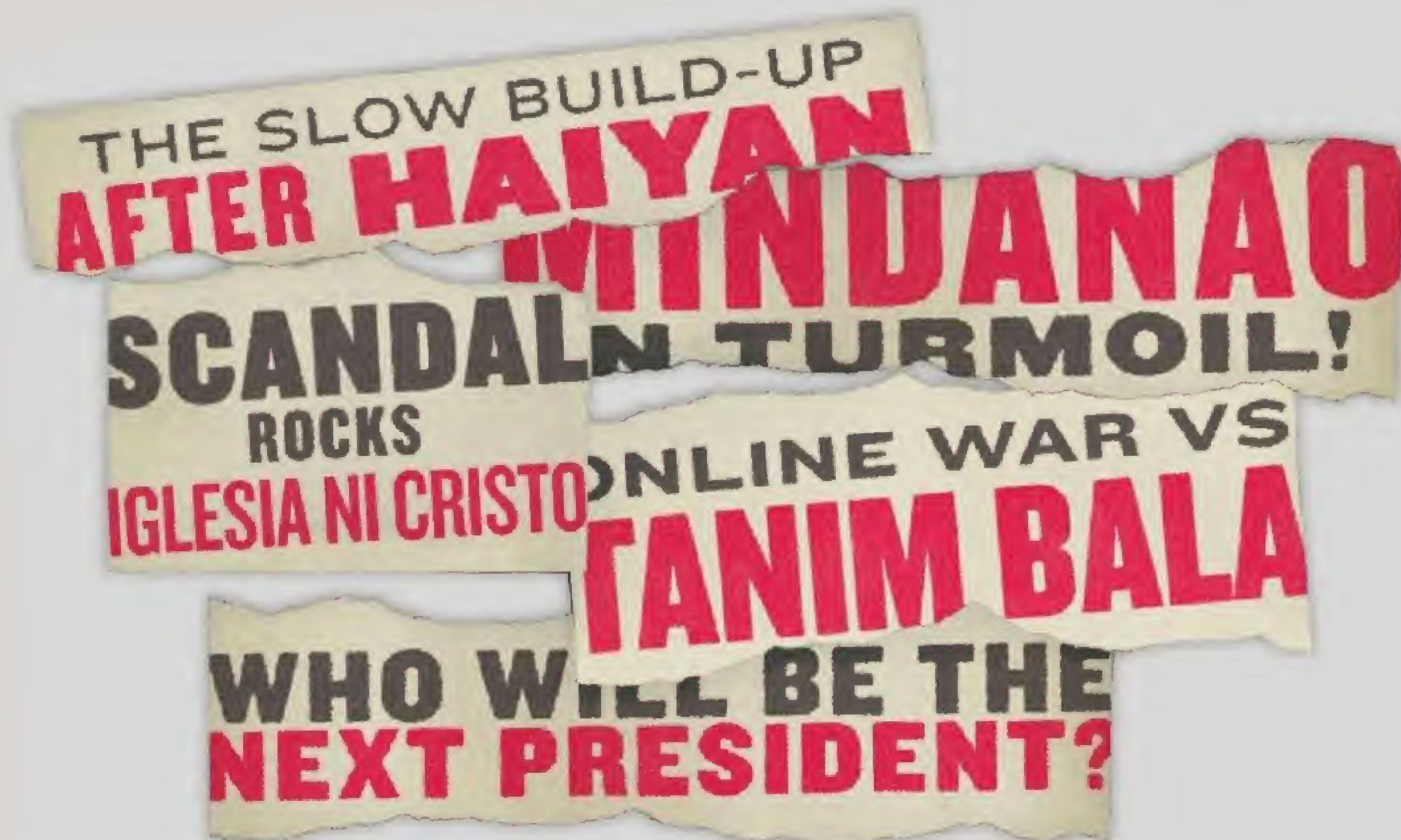
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Recent history has seen some of the government's shadiest figures and faultiest systems step into the spotlight. We give you the lowdown on the country's most talked about political events this year

WORDS BY MIXKAELA VILLALON & DON JAUCIAN



MINDANAO IN TURMOIL

In the last five years, Mindanao saw the Zamboanga Siege, the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) in legal limbo, the botched Mamasapano operation, and militarization driving its Lumads to Manila to have their voices heard.

Reaction: Depressingly underwhelming, Mindanao suffers from being too far from Manila and out of our immediate concerns. Despite a high casualty count, Mindanao issues are nothing but a passing hashtag to the average Manileño.

Update: Absolutely nothing. The rebel commanders of the Zamboanga Siege and the Mamasapano encounter remain at large, these clashes undermine peace processes and the BBL, and contribute to the displacement of Mindanao people.

HAIYAN AFTERMATH

One of the strongest tropical storms on earth hit Eastern

Visayas in 2013, resulting in more than 6,000 casualties and millions of pesos in devastation.

Reaction: When the first reports came in, governments, NGOs, and civilians from around the world scrambled to assist affected areas.

Update: In a statement released August this year, the UN declared the government's rebuilding efforts inadequate. Roughly 2,000 of the affected families still live in temporary shelters, only a handful of infrastructure has been rebuilt, and more than half the local workforce in affected areas remain unemployed.

"LAGLAG BALA" AIRPORT SCAM

A viral Facebook post from an Overseas Foreign Worker on how airport security extorted money from him because of a bullet allegedly found in his luggage snowballed into an international embarrassment as more people came out with similar experiences. The brazen extortion scam continues

despite intense media scrutiny.

Reaction: The scam—along with perceived government inaction—has netizens in an uproar. Travelers are cling-wrapping their bags, Japanese TV shows are lampooning our airports, and a mobile flash game where the hero has to evade bullets being dropped by airport security already has half a million downloads.

Update: After months of skirting around the issue and claiming that the *tanim-bala* scam is just a ruse to destroy the government's credibility, there's finally a senate hearing over the issue. A handful of minor airport officials have been suspended from their duties, while the heads of the Manila International Airport Authority and the Office of Transportation Security continue to tap dance on quicksand.

2016 POLITICAL CIRCUS

The elections are still months away, but the clowns have tumbled in: Former Interior

Secretary Mar Roxas is making a heart shape with his fingers just behind President Aquino; Vice President Binay is waging a me-against-the-world campaign from his still-unaccounted-for mansion in Batangas; Senator Poe is embroiled in a citizenship/identity inquiry from being an orphan left on the church steps in Iloilo; and Senator Santiago refuses to disclose her precarious state of health while choosing the late dictator's son as her running-mate. And Duterte finally decided to run for president. *Whew.*

Reaction: The memes and mudslinging have started both on and offline. It's hard to tell if there's a current favorite among the candidates, but all national issues from here on serve as a litmus test for those in the running.

Update: We'll just have to wait and see.

IGLESIA NI CRISTO SCANDAL

In a YouTube video posted online, Iglesia ni Cristo senior

ministers Tenny and Angel Manalo—the mother and brother, respectively, of current INC executive minister Eduardo Manalo—stated that their “lives are in danger,” adding that some of the group's religious ministers have been unlawfully detained. Allegations of corruption and harassment against their council leaders are said to have spurred the crisis.

Reaction: A five-day, 20,000-person strong protest against the then-pending DOJ investigation was staged by the INC, paralyzing sections of EDSA, angering affected citizens, and triggering INC memes online.

Update: The DOJ has junked Angel Manalo's criminal complaints against the church's leaders for “lack of probable cause,” although another criminal case filed by an ex-INC minister is still ongoing. But, as of this writing, the accused party, which involves high ranking officials of the church, continually fails to show up at the DOJ to answer the charges.



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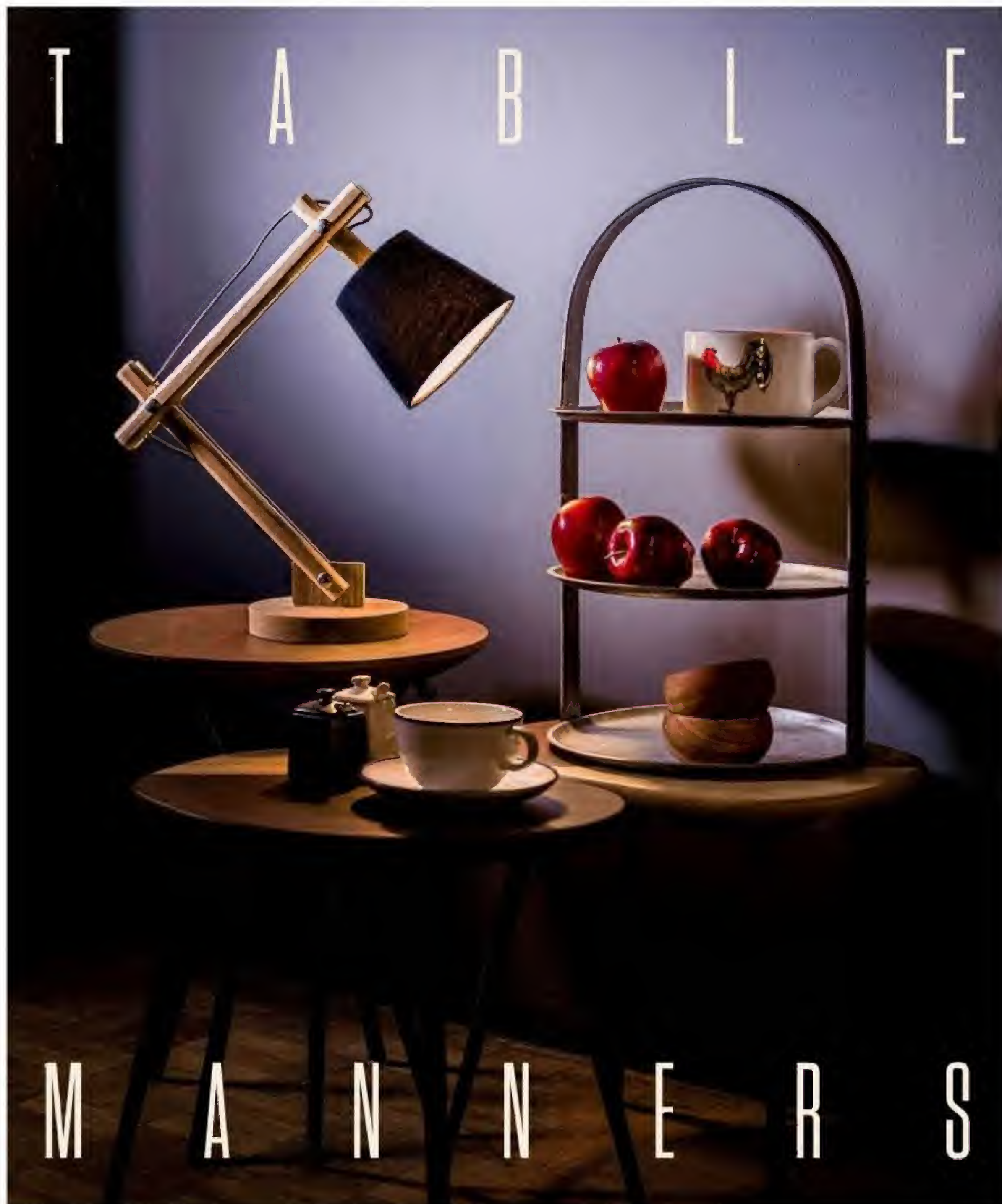
December 2015-January 2016

EDITED BY
DON
JAUCIAN

SPACE

ISSUE NO.
94

DESIGN + INTERIORS + ARCHITECTURE + TECHNOLOGY



Whether for intimate gatherings or solitary downtime, these modernist home accessories bring your entertaining game up a notch

PHOTOS BY PATRICK DIOKNO / STYLED BY DEVI DE VEYRA

Triboa Bay Living Table Lamp, Side Tables, Ceramic Cream and Sugar Bins
Crate & Barrel Galvanized Three-Tiered Server, Roulette Blue Band Coffee Cup and Saucer, Hand-Painted Rooster

THE HOUSE OF SPIRITS

Crate & Barrel Metal Caddy with Wooden Compartmentalized Organizer, Wooden Muddler, Metal Corkscrew, Linen Table Napkin, Carter Ice Thongs, Cocktail Spoon, Carter Cocktail Shaker, Cocktail Mixing Glass, Regal Beer Glass, Half Pint Glass Tumbler with Crown, Candle Holder, Parrot Bottle Opener with Corkscrew

Tribos Bay Living Mini Glass Tumbler, Chevron Pattern Wooden Top Coffee Table





IN GOOD TASTE

Tribeca Bay Living Distressed Wood Dining Table, Goblet, Three-Tiered Painted Aluminum Dessert Stand, Ivory Plates

West Elm Agate Coasters

Pottery Barn Paros Round Charger

Crate & Barrel Olive Wood Cheese Server with Cheese Knife, Glass Rabbit, Dried Acorns, Jet Flatware, Charcoal Table Napkin, Metal Napkin Ring, Stone Salt and Pepper Bowls with Spoons



Coupe de Grace

Defined by bold strokes and sharp graphic elements, Renault's Coupe Corbusier is a concept car emblematic of the the Swiss-French architect it was named after

WORDS BY MIGUEL ORTEGA

IN 1920, THE legendary Swiss-French architect and one of the pioneers of modern architecture, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris, took on the pseudonym Le Corbusier (*inset*), an alteration of his grandfather's name. He had a penchant for functionality and rallied against artistic and architectural movements of the past—the non-functional and inefficient.

In the same year, he showcased the Maison Citrohan, a nod towards the Citroën Automobile Company. Consisting of prefabricated houses built through an assembly line, similar to cars, it illustrated his fascination with the automobile's



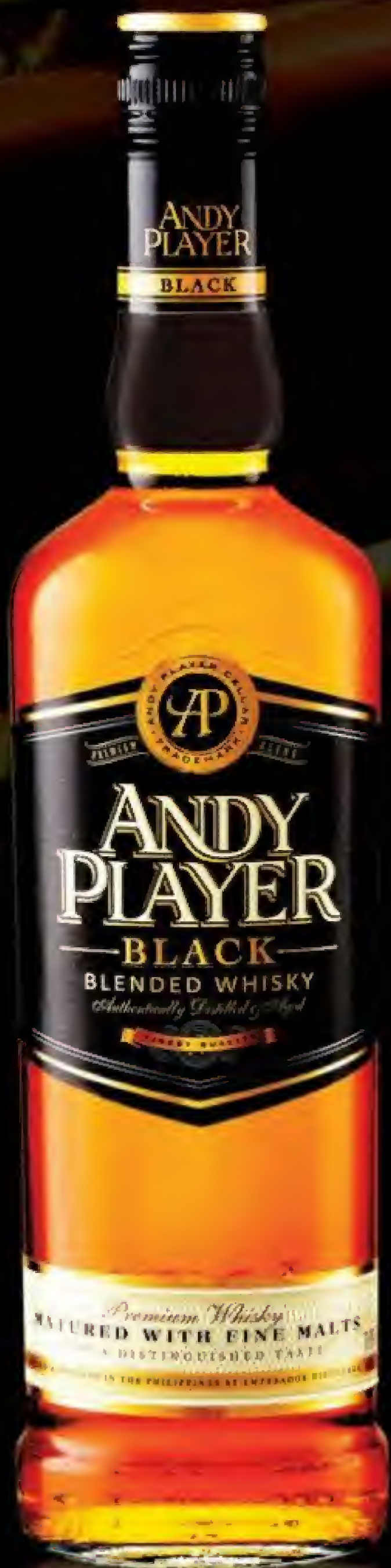
versatility and its application to architecture. Today, half a century after his death, a French car manufacturer returns the honor.

Renault (renault.com) drew inspiration from the 1930s—an era dominated by Le Corbusier and the golden age of automobiles. The result: the Coupe Corbusier concept car. Immediately, the coupe's demeanor echoes the architect's works, his elements seen throughout the car's exterior.

His love for geometric lines is manifest, specifically in the areas around the front wheels, which also suggests elevations in the body—Le Corbusier is known for raising sections of his structures using support pillars. His use of horizontal windows to

maximize natural lighting is also evident in the concept car's window panels, low flowing rooftop, and butterfly doors. A simple yet elegant grille composed of angled slats stands as the only ornament, attributed to the architect's distaste for the elaborate.

Renault, however, has not provided details on the car's powertrain, which suggests that this is purely a design concept. It was unveiled in Le Corbusier's modernist country estate retreat, Villa Savoye, where it stands (until March 20, 2016) as a part of France's Centre des Monuments Nationaux, exhibition, "Cars for Living: The Automobile and Modernism in the 20th and 21st Centuries," a fitting tribute to one of the men responsible from driving design and architecture toward the 21st century. ■



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Drink Responsibly

ASC Ref. No. E003P101415A

Man of Steel

Mentored and guided by local design luminary Eric Paras, Jude Tiotuico has made a living out of shaping and forming the toughest of materials: metal

WORDS BY JAM PASQUAL
PHOTOS BY JL JAVIER

FROM THE SWORDS of olden times to the skyscrapers of the modern cityscape, we've come to understand the material of metal as having a certain forceful personality. It is tough, brutish, and meant for either high, towering structures or to be wielded as weapons. It is recognized for its durability and stubbornness, but rarely ever for its beauty, at least to the untrained eye—a way of seeing that Jude Tiotuico seeks to change.

Known to some as the man behind Industria Edition (159 Doña Lucing Ave., Friendship Highway, Calibutbut, Bacolor,

Pampanga; 045-887-1996; industriaedition.com), which specializes in creating metal and steel-molded statement pieces designed to harmonize with their given space, Tiotuico started the brand in 2007. But his relationship with metal goes back much further, and involves his collaboration with one of the design industry's greats: Eric Paras.

"We actually started [working with] steel in the early 90s," Tiotuico says. "I consider him as my mentor for traditional pieces, creating stuff that's more down to earth, not out of this world, something that people can understand."



THE IRON THRONE
Industria Edition's modular Reef divider screen has individual columns which can be combined, and the Weave sofa

Tiotuico experiments with free-form shapes, drawing inspiration from nature and, in his words, "moments in time."

It was this early partnership that caused Industria to come into being. The two began creating what Tiotuico would call "transitional pieces"—shaped and designed to hold both modern and classic sensibilities, as if stuck between the tastes of two eras. "Most of our pieces were spin-offs of practical forms but interpreted in our own techniques," he says.

Though Paras still remains a major part of Industria's creative team, Tiotuico has since taken



METAL GEAR

Top: Jude Tiotuico at his workshop and showroom in Bacolor, Pampanga. **From left:** The Loopy chair, a Katha Award winner for Best Product Design for Furniture at the 2015 Manila FAME last October; the Cubico coffee table consists of a single sheet of marble with multiple frames of steel welded together to form the legs; the grace of movement is depicted in flight by the Seagulls ornament.

his brand and craft to new heights, experimenting with more free-form shapes, drawing inspiration from nature and—in his words—"moments in time." Take for example the Starburst, a light fixture shaped to resemble the instant before a star's explosion releases all its energy. Or the Molave table, whose base reimagines the twining quality of trunks and branches in a geometric yet fluid form.

Industria currently busies itself with expansion, which shouldn't be difficult considering how much recognition Tiotuico has received in the local design arena, with platforms such as Manila FAME extolling his name. But whatever the future holds for this modern day blacksmith, his attitude towards design, perhaps as stubborn as metal itself, remains constant: "Design shouldn't be just visualized," he says. "It should always be something to be experienced, and to always be felt." It is perhaps this philosophy that compels a material as stubborn as metal to soften and submit to Tiotuico's whims. ■



MINDS AT WORK

Jude Tiotuico is, by himself, already a creative force to be reckoned with. But his collaborators—big names in the art and design world themselves—allow the designer to break from Industria's mold



BUDJI LAYUG

One half of the tandem that runs the design company known as Budji Royal and a notable force in the interior design scene, Layug collaborated with Tiotuico for last year's Design Week Philippines. The Molave table and the Ciclo sofa are creations born of their team-up.



LILIANNA MANAHAN

Tiotuico describes Manahan's contributions to their collaboration as having a sort of "playfulness". Take the I-Beam, for example: a bench made to resemble the steel beams one would find in high rise scaffoldings, which sports a microfiber sitting surface.



LEEROY NEW

New, whose artworks are known to possess a monstrous or alien-like quality, had to find the right manufacturer for his foray into industrial design. This is where Tiotuico came in—his part in helping create the V-Zag table was concerned most with execution and efficiency.



A SPORTING CHANCE

Pulling off a death-defying stunt during its unveiling at this year's Frankfurt Motor Show—Jaguar's new F-PACE exhibits show-stopping strength despite its SUV build

WORDS BY DON JAUCIAN

THERE'S SOMETHING AGGRESSIVELY masculine and yet impractical about driving a sports car in a packed urban setting. However, revving along the sloping roads of, say, Tagaytay, might be a good way to showcase this cat's capability to glide and purr.

Ever on the lookout for ingenious ways to improve and tinker with their existing vehicles, Jaguar has recently transformed the C-X17 concept, first unveiled at the Frankfurt Motor Show in 2014, into a lean, mean SUV that has the core of a powerful sports car: the F-PACE. Already gaining solid buzz among car enthusiasts, Jaguar expects the car to already be sold out when it's released next year, hence the F-PACE First Edition, which will only be sold in 2,000 units.

Before the hype gets in the way of the F-PACE's actual capabilities, Jaguar unveiled the car with a record-breaking streak. It set the Guinness World Record for the largest ever loop-the-loop, showcasing its agility and strength at the 63-foot tall loop at this year's Frankfurt Motor Show, accelerating at a 6.5G force—more than what pilots contend with on space shuttle launches.

A 360 hp 3.0L supercharged V6 engine—which peaks at 155 mph at a 0-60 mph acceleration in 5.1 seconds—hides behind its graphic front grille and muscular bonnet; a piece of design language that demonstrates the F-PACE's sports car DNA. The Lightweight Aluminum architecture also gives the car its distinctive design, from its slender lines, rear

THE FAST LANE

From top: Jaguar's new F-PACE will initially be released under the First Edition range, which will only have 2,000 units globally; some of the unique features of the First Edition include 22-inch Double Helix Alloy wheels and a houndstooth embossed Windsor Leather Sports seats; Design director Ian Callum envisioned the F-PACE as the next generation of Jaguar vehicles.

haunches, and tail light graphics. Twenty-two-inch wheels and full LED headlights are some of the carryovers from the C-X17 concept.

Jaguar design director Ian Callum promises that the F-PACE, despite its death-defying capabilities, is practical enough as an SUV. It can fit five people and their belongings (it has a 650-liter luggage compartment) for a leisurely weekend trip, or even just as an everyday car. Inside is an advanced infotainment system that includes a 10.2-inch touchscreen with a quad-core processor, which makes for a responsive interface. It also has a true door-to-door guidance navigation system that easily learns your daily commute. For connectivity sticklers, the F-PACE has a WiFi hotspot that can handle up to eight devices.

Jaguar (32nd and 4th Crescent Park, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; 856-2277; jaguar.com) has consistently emphasized the F-PACE's family-friendly build. Ultimately, however, it is for anyone who loves cruising through roads at top speeds with the grace of a sports car, all while comfortably enjoying the features of an SUV. ■

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Lighting by Numbers

Øivind Slaatto's love for the Fibonacci sequence resurfaces in his latest collaboration with Louis Poulsen

WORDS BY JACST. SAMPAYAN

IN 2008, THE Danish industrial designer Øivind Slaatto suffered a concussion that turned him into an accidental light connoisseur. "I've always been very sensitive to light—probably more than is normal," he admits in an interview. "I feel really happy when lighting is good; I get headaches with strong light and can be physically ill when I'm exposed to poor lighting."

He uses this particular "handicap" in his designs, particularly with the Patera lamp, a recent collaboration with the lighting manufacturer Louis Poulsen (*GF Units 106 & 107 Fort Victoria 5th Ave., Corner 23rd Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; livinginnovations.ph*). The lamp, which is made up of diamond-shaped cells, takes inspiration from the complementary characteristics of the Fibonacci sequence. "My ultimate goal was to create a three-dimensional Sudoku. It was an extremely mathematical assignment. In fact, it's the most complex light I have ever made," Slaatto says. "I think it has a certain poetry about it, and my aim was to construct a modern crystal chandelier."

Slaatto believes in creating pieces that leave a clear, strong, and lasting image on the viewer while easily relating to it. While the Patera lamp looks complicated, he says it doesn't perplex or feel forced. "I hope people will feel inspired to move around it. I hope it generates life." ■

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A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME – WITH RIMOWA

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December 2015-January 2016

EDITED BY
GINO DE LA PAZ

THE EYE

FASHION + STYLE + GROOMING

ISSUE NO.

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BASIC

WORDS BY JACS T. SAMPAYAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK NICDAO

Designer Joanna Preysler-Francisco's inspiration runs from all things sleek and urban to accomplished women who exude a quiet elegance—the latter featured in her brand's latest campaign with Mark Nicdao

INSTINCTS

NATALIA ZOBEL



Maricris Zobel and daughter Natalia

JOANNA PREYSLER-FRANCISCO dislikes the term “it.”

“Saying that something is an ‘it’ shirt, or an ‘it’ anything automatically dates it. It insinuates a timeframe of acceptability wherein there is a craze that everyone *must have* this item right now, but then it is fleeting,” she says. The designer and entrepreneur thinks that customers tend to move on to the next “it” thing right away. That’s why her team’s focus for the past 14 years has been building their customer base with loyal and trusting patrons.

Since teaming up with her husband Raul to open clothing brand Carbon (*Ground Floor, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati; 757-4140*) back in 2002, Francisco says they have stayed away from anything too trendy or mainstream while still trying to be relevant. “Although we have had our share of items that customers go crazy about and try to reorder or ask us to bring back, the very essence of Carbon is having items in limited quantities. We try to be as close to bespoke as possible while building our brand. We like the feeling of exclusivity and anti-fast

fashion. We like that when we bring something back, there is something slightly different about it, a tweak here and there.”

While her husband is creative director for their brands (which includes Tint and their newest store, Joanna Preysler Boutique), Francisco designs everything for the brand, and the pieces are produced locally. She says that her inspirations are based on “real life—urban people in an urban setting doing urban things. . . . Walking the streets of New York, or Tokyo, sitting in cafes in Paris or having tapas in Spain,



Clockwise, from left: Camille Sison-Reyes; Monica Dizon; and Stephanie Kienle

“THE WORLD IS ONE BIG MOOD BOARD OF INSPIRATION—IT’S JUST A MATTER OF FILTERING IT ALL, SIFTING THROUGH WHAT IS ESSENTIAL AND NON-ESSENTIAL FOR CARBON AND WHAT WILL ENHANCE ITS DNA.”



THE EYE STYLE

Jessica Kienle





Joanna and Raul Francisco

“WE TRY TO BE AS CLOSE TO BESPOKE AS POSSIBLE WHILE BUILDING OUR BRAND. WE LIKE THE FEELING OF EXCLUSIVITY AND ANTI-FAST FASHION. WE LIKE THAT WHEN WE BRING SOMETHING BACK, THERE IS SOMETHING SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT ABOUT IT, A TWEAK HERE AND THERE.”

catching the tube in London or checking out the high street vibe—all these snapshots of real life, of how people work within their setting and their cities, inspire our aesthetic,” she shares. “The world is one big mood board of inspiration—it’s just a matter of filtering it all, sifting through what is essential and non-essential for Carbon, what will enhance its DNA and build equity for the brand.” On that note, she adds that art plays a huge role in the couple’s lives and serves as fuel for their vision. “Raul and I have such a passion for art in all its forms, and such a great respect for all artists. Next to our children and our stores, art is what consumes us.”

In their latest campaign, the label highlights different Carbon women, from Maricris and Natalia Zobel to Stephanie and

Jessica Kienle—shot by a longtime collaborator: “Mark Nicdao did our first Carbon campaign back in 2003. The brand was new then, and we wanted some shots to get the word out there. We could not have chosen better. Even back then, Mark was our guy,” Francisco recalls. “After many years of honing our brand further, we have come full circle. It was a no-brainer for us to call on Mark once more.”

According to Francisco, Carbon has taken a lot of twists and turns in the last few years, but has remained true to its DNA of pared down, precise, and uncontrived style (They still stick to a neutral palette—black, white, navy, taupe, shades of gray—with seasonal injections of stripes, checks or denim). And she says that the women they chose present a clear reflection of the brand’s values through and through.



“Apart from being confident, unique, beautiful, and stylish, these women have substance. They embody the purposeful, relevant, no-nonsense, and authentic characteristics of the Carbon woman. I admire all these women for different reasons. They all stand out in my eyes.” Apart from representing the brand’s newest collections, the photos from this campaign will be featured in an exhibit this month in Greenbelt.

A collaboration such as this is a testament to their belief that synergy with like-minded people can only yield a positive outcome, which will help fulfill their mantra of “local with a global feel.”

“Our brand is enhanced and the outcome will always put a better face on the Philippine retail scene,” Francisco says. ■



IÑIGO ELIZALDE

The New York-based artist and textile designer, whose eponymous rug company has become known for its vibrant patterns, talks about his passion for experimentation

INTERVIEW BY GINO DE LA PAZ

IÑIGO ELIZALDE had been working in fashion as an art director and branding manager for many years before he felt the need to take a break. During that pause he accepted an offer from Evelyn Lim-Forbes, general manager of carpet company Tai Ping, to produce a capsule collection. After over five years, the rug business he eventually established out of his apartment in New York City has evolved to become a full-on textile design laboratory encompassing pillows, textiles, beanbags, and throw pillows.

The hand-knotted floor coverings produced by Iñigo Elizalde Rugs (inigoelizalderugs.com), loomed by expert weavers in the Philippines, Nepal, and India, are born out of experimentation. His Glitch collection from earlier this year, for example, came about after an electrical power surge in his building caused all the computer

monitors to freeze. The distinctly tech-heavy inspiration was then carried out in all-natural materials such as cactus, nettle, hemp, Nepalese wool, and silk. In early 2016, the company will be busy placing large rug installations in residences from Connecticut to San Francisco and at various Aloft Hotel properties worldwide.

"We take pleasure in designing with reckless abandon and are not afraid to push the envelope if it results in an object that is thoughtful and rich," says Elizalde.

What are you working on now? Our next collection of rugs, which are inspired by my photos of airport tarmacs from all of my travels in the past five years. That and florals. Yes, we're finally doing florals—a perfect foil to concrete and asphalt tarmacs. Fingers crossed it all works out.

What time of the day are you most inspired? In the early evening, when I get home from work and sit quietly in my backyard to relax. Also, right when I wake up in the morning and I'm flooded with ideas which I then write down and sketch in my trusty notebook.

Favorite hotel: I just got back from San Sebastián, Spain, and stayed at the Hotel de Londres y de Inglaterra, which was pretty hard to beat. That said, I'm a huge fan of Airbnb.

Necessary extravagance: Excellent food, always. And gourmet salt. I cook. It matters.

Neighborhood restaurant: Txikito, a Basque tapas place in Chelsea, my NYC hood.

Favorite cocktail: A Manhattan on the rocks. **Knob Creek bourbon** preferred.

Favorite book: *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck. I did my first ever book report on it in the 3rd grade and got in trouble because my teacher didn't think I was capable of reading and analyzing Steinbeck at that age. My father got called in. I won the case.

Favorite dish: Sinigang

Jeans: Uniqlo and Levi's

Footwear: **Adidas Stan Smith** sneakers, Clarks Desert Boots, and Studio Slowear shoes for everyday, and Crockett & Jones from London for dress shoes

Cologne: **Anbar by Comme des Garçons** for everyday and **Christian Dior Eau Sauvage** for night

Favorite artists: How do you define "artist?" There are too many to mention.



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EVOLUTION OF THE SPECIES

Arnaud Faeh, co-founder of the progressive label OAMC, talks about creating menswear with an effortlessly modern spirit

WORDS BY GINO DE LA PAZ



WHILE STREETWEAR ELUDES easy definition, it tends to comprise anything that is, in most cases, comfortable, accessible, young, and graphic. “What is not streetwear today apart from suits?” asks Arnaud Faeh. As one of the driving forces behind the exciting new menswear label OAMC (*Hoodwink, Upper Ground Floor, SM Aura Premier, Taguig*; 553-5559), Faeh—together with creative director Luke Meier—believes that their two-year-old company is one of the few that can do a graphic t-shirt as exquisitely as they can a tailored suit. “We can do those two things, high and low, with the same credibility and on the highest level possible.”

Trained as a tailor in Italy, Meier earned his stripes as head designer at Supreme, a cult streetwear brand whose ethos appears to guide others that came in its wake, from Alexander Wang, and Public School to Hood By Air. “Luke is an incredibly talented person,” says the 20-something Faeh. “I run the business, I run the brand. I protect him from all this so he can concentrate on being creative.”

Though the OAMC atelier is based in Milan, where the French Faeh lives and oversees production, and the Canadian Meier lives and designs primarily in Paris where he develops many of the fabrics used in the collection, the overall look, Faeh explains, is influenced not just by Europe or by Japan and the US, but by the whole world.

For Autumn/Winter, OAMC once again gleans influences from sportswear, Italian tailoring, and workwear, but unified by the theme

ALPINE HIGH

Clockwise, from top left: OAMC Expedition umbrella; 8000 t-shirt; 8000 blanket; Glacier laced pullover; Survey coat, Fishtail shirt, and Local pant in wool

of duality, of the spirituality of the Himalayas and the evolutionary adaptations of the creatures that live there. Together with icons such as the Everest, the snow leopard, and Catholic crosses, the collection is dotted with the Charles Darwin quote “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”

Faeh points to a bonded wool overcoat that seems to sum up the spirit of this collection. It’s made of a textile he and Meier developed: a wool cashmere silk fabric bonded to a jersey with foam inside. “Our clothes are manufactured in Italy, where it’s still very traditional,” he says. “We arrive with our new ideas and push boundaries.” For next spring, OAMC is set to offer perforated suits. “It’s all about innovation today, but you have to innovate with taste.”

Upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that OAMC has managed to turn something casual into something equally refined by focusing on craftsmanship. The seams of a shirt, for example, are so well done that you can wear it inside out or back to front. “Every aspect is well considered since we really want to be the next modern menswear brand,” continues Faeh. “All the pieces can sit next to Jil Sander or Balenciaga; that’s where we want to be.” ■



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CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

British adventurer James Bowthorpe teams up with Tudor to sail the Hudson in a boat made from rubbish found on the streets of New York

WORDS BY GIO DIONISIO



IF SOME MEN WEAR WATCHES to merely tell the time, others wear them to keep track of their adventures. Since October, British explorer James Bowthorpe has been sailing from the Hudson River's source at Lake Tear of the Clouds in the Adirondack Mountains and down 315 miles of grade-four rapids and savage weather back to New York City—with Tudor's North Flag on his wrist, a timepiece crafted to perform in the most extreme conditions known to man.

This feat of exploration is the subject of the *Hudson River Project*, a feature documentary by Bowthorpe together with British-born, New York-based photographer Antony Crook, and with an original score by the Scottish band Mogwai. It will be released in early 2016.

Bowthorpe has hitchhiked and biked across America on numerous occasions and was also able to circumnavigate the globe in 175 days back in 2009, but he had never gone white-water rafting prior to this momentous voyage. Raising the element of danger is the fact that Bowthorpe's boat will be made from scraps found on the streets of the Big Apple. "The central idea is very simple:

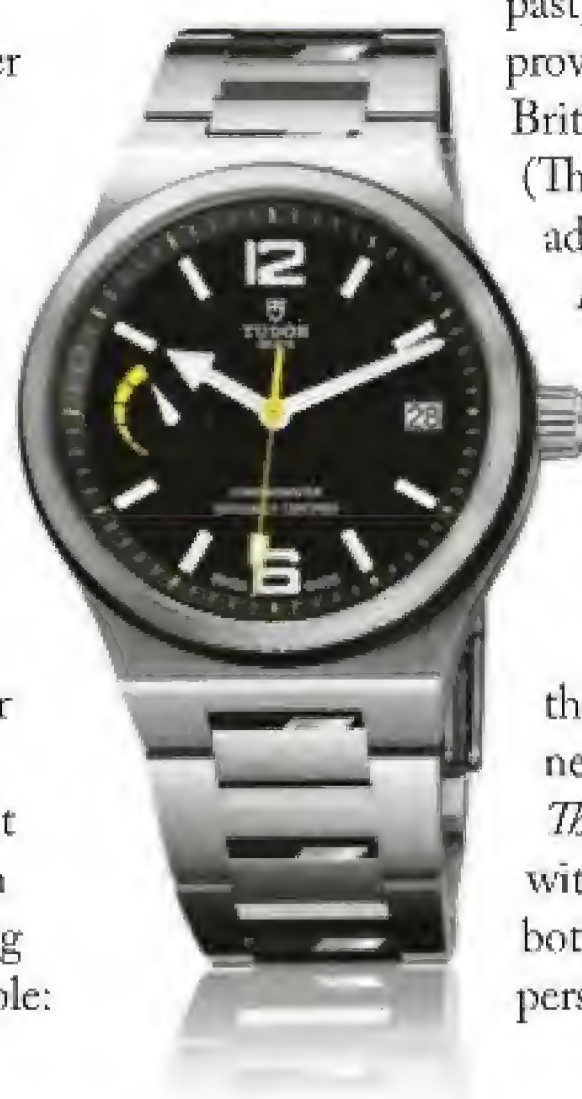
build a boat from a city's waste, take it to the source of the city's river—the river without which the city would not exist—and row the boat back," says the University of Edinburgh-educated globetrotter.

It may seem atypical for a brand such as Tudor (*Washington Watches, Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center, Makati; 729-0808. Lucerne, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati; 728-2828; tudorwatch.com*) to support such a project. But its older sibling Rolex has stood behind similar quests in the

past, like in 1952 when the company provided 26 Oyster Princes to the British North Greenland Expedition (The North Flag was inspired by this adventure). This time around, the

Hudson River Project's aim—to raise awareness about our connection with wastefulness, the wild, and the nature of exploration—may have been enough of a draw for Tudor.

"This project isn't going to save the world, but the world doesn't need saving," said Bowthorpe in *The Telegraph*. "It's our relationship with it that needs to change." It is both a passionate statement and a personal challenge. ■





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INDEPENDENT SPIRIT

One of Washington D.C.'s premier men's shops opens its doors in Manila, offering a mix of global streetwear staples and its own line of cool clothing

WORDS BY GINO DE LA PAZ

FOUNDED IN 2004 by US-based cousins Omar Quiambao and Larry Incognito, Commonwealth is a specialty retailer that seeks to champion counterculture. The rails in its stores in Norfolk, Virginia and Washington, D.C., heave with products by new and established street, fashion, and sportswear brands. After more than a decade—and after *GQ* included Commonwealth in their list of top 100 stores men should visit—the Virginia Beach natives have finally opened their first outpost outside the States.

“At each location, whether in Washington DC, Virginia Beach, or here in Manila, we try our best to find products and brands that will help express the opinions of the local scene. In the Philippines, weather is a definite factor that shifts the product line up,” says Quiambao, a creative director who has been involved with some of youth culture’s most influential labels and companies. He felt it was a good time for people interested in Commonwealth (*UG/F, SM Aura Premier, Taguig*) to have the experience in real life versus online.

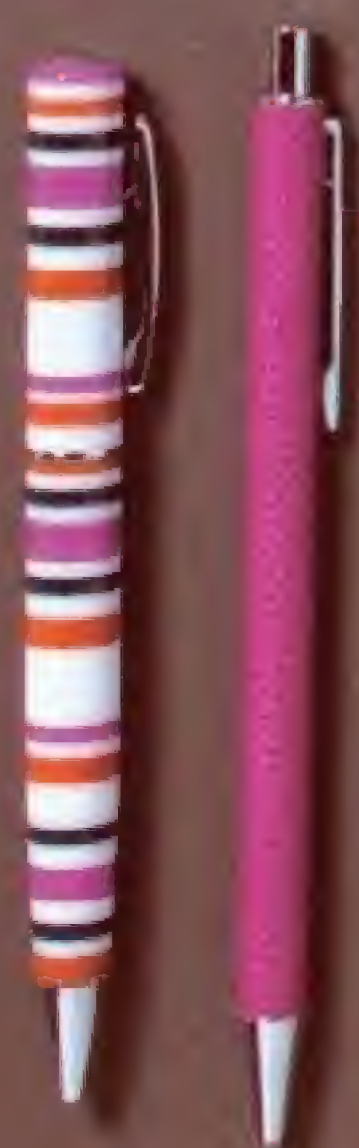
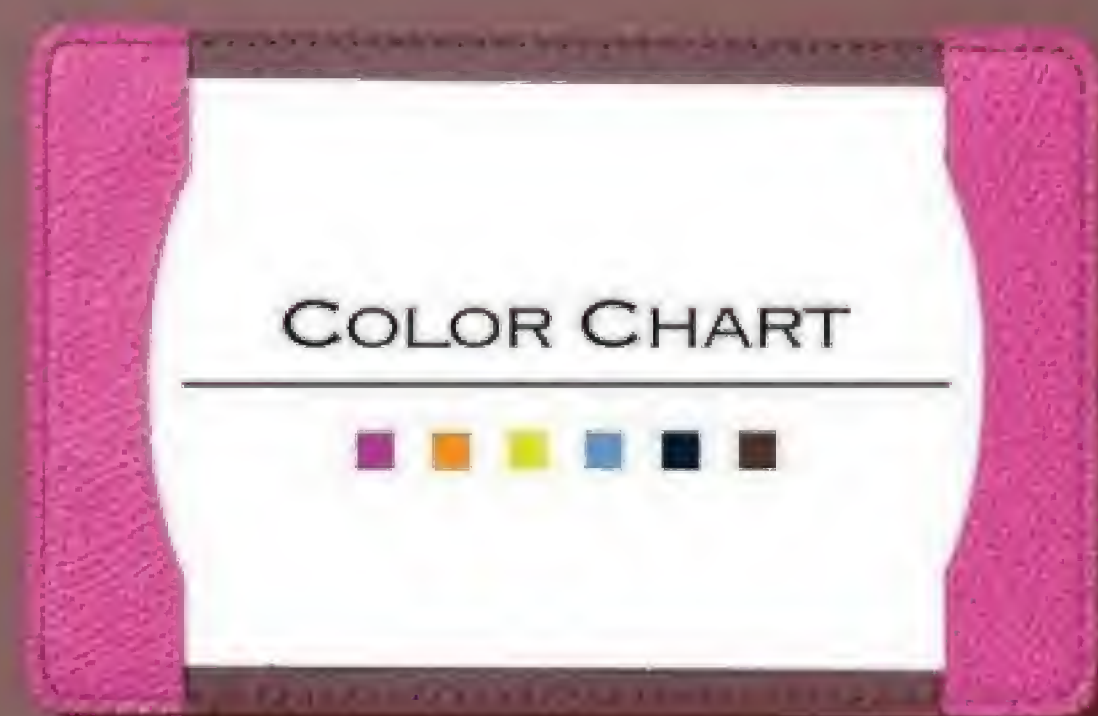
“I think it was an easy decision to ask Omar to expand his business internationally. Timing made sense—they just celebrated their 10th anniversary, so this felt like a homecoming of sorts for them,” says local partner Mike Concepcion, who has followed Commonwealth’s growth over the years.

According to Concepcion, the brand roster in the Philippine boutique will be closely rooted to the core list in the US, but will also include offerings to suit the Manila market. Items by emerging punk-inspired label Brain Dead share space with tees by Period Correct and Dime, accessories from Anti Social Social Club and Alltimers, and Commonwealth’s own in-house line of t-shirts, coach jackets, and snapbacks. There’s also footwear by Comme des Garçons Play, Adidas Originals, Nike, and Vans, plus a collaboration with sneaker company Clae, which is exclusive to the Manila branch. ■



IN STYLE WE TRUST
From top: Larry Incognito, Mike Concepcion, and Omar Quiambao of Commonwealth Manila; T-shirts and caps by New York City-based brand Alltimers; trainers from Italian sportswear company Diadora, Comme des Garçons Play, Chuck Taylor sneakers.





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OPINIONS + IDEAS + PERSPECTIVES



🕒 Paris is Burning

LIZZA GUERRERO NAKPIL

The terrorist attacks in Paris were the worst the city encountered since World War II, inspiring expressions of sympathy from the Filipino online community. But does our French connection go beyond our obsessions with *la vie Parisienne*?

That Erap Touch

MARGAUX SALCEDO

Joseph Estrada is as quick with the punches in movies, as he is with punchlines when working a dinner crowd. He would've been a perfect APEC party host since the guy knows his wine, his food, and personally writes his own menu.

Smells Like Team Spirit

PATRICK PAEZ

In a same-party system where one group is hardly distinguishable from the next, there's little wonder why our politicians survive on motherhood statements and why we vote leaders based on popularity and pedigree.

Paris is Burning

The terrorist attacks in Paris triggered expressions of concern from the Filipino online community, not to mention inspired self-serving selfies filtered with the French flag. But is there more to our attachments to Paris beyond our obsessions with their clothes and chic cafes?

For Filipino millennials who have only just discovered French couture thanks to the H&M x Balmain collab, or *le bistro* thanks to Bench, it may come as a delicious surprise that our cultural and political DNA have been intertwined with France for more than 125 years.

The *ilustrados* living in Europe—highly educated, extremely cultivated—wore their veneration of all things French as a badge of honor, a political statement worlds away from the reasons that today's Filipino covets a Dior or a Chanel. A vignette of those times is celebrated in what is perhaps the most famous painting in the Philippines, the million-dollar *Parisian Life* by Juan Luna. It features the painter's brother Antonio, Jose Rizal (priggish, with back turned), and their comrade-in-arms Dr. Ariston Bautista Lin, stealing sidelong glances at a coquettish mademoiselle on a spring day in 1892. The light-hearted mood is almost identical to what one imagines it might have been the evening of last November 13 in the café La Belle Équipe at 92 Rue de Charon in Paris' 11th *arrondissement*, just before 19 patrons were decimated at just one of seven locations that bathed Paris in blood and tears.

It was an evening that would send a collective twinge through the Filipino soul. After all, France—and its universal values of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*—inspired not just the American Revolution, but allowed two generations of Filipinos to re-imagine their country and to conjure up, against all odds, our own Philippine Revolution in 1896.

The Paris terror attacks therefore struck at the core of the same philosophy that challenged us not just to dream but also to fight beyond all exhaustion and reason to inaugurate Asia's first republic.

The Filipinos in Paris arrived exactly at the city's most exciting time—the exuberant *Belle Époque*—when Eiffel was building the iconic Tower for the Universal Exposition. Make no mistake, while the *ilustrados* became boulevardiers with zest—wearing expensive silk suits, top hats, and capes, France was not the melting-pot of races that it is now, and the Filipinos were very much an oddity on the Champs-Élysées. Still, they preferred this scintillating capital to the suffocating biases leveled against them in Barcelona and Madrid (Ariston Bautista Lin wrote his friends in Manila that he had been obliged to learn Eng-



lish boxing plus the finer points of both French and Italian swordsmanship to defend their honor almost daily on the streets of Spain). Thus, the *ilustrado* expats gravitated to Paris, which was both literally and figuratively the "City of Lights," referring to its pioneering streetlights as well as its enlightened philosophy. The brothers Pardo

de Tavera and their brother-in-law Juan Luna maintained apartments at 65 Boulevard Arago, in the 13th *arrondissement*, near the studio of Luna's archrival Félix Resurrección Hidalgo. (Thanks to YouTube, you can actually view the gardens where the Lunas and Jose Rizal would fence.) Rizal himself took up digs at the Hotel de Paris in the

France—and its universal values of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*—inspired not just the American Revolution, but allowed two generations of Filipinos to reimagine their country and to conjure up, against all odds, our own Philippine Revolution of 1896.

9th *arrondissement*, a short walk from the Gare du Nord train station. All the addresses sound perilously close to the scenes of last November's massacres in the 11th district.

The Spanish secret police who raided Andres Bonifacio's rented apartment in Manila catalogued his reading material, which included the novels of Victor Hugo (*A Tale of Two Cities*), Alexandre Dumas (*The Three Musketeers*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*), works by Robespierre, as well as the authoritative work by Thomas Carlyle on the history of the French Revolution. One presumes that since the captured works were in French, Bonifacio had schooled himself enough in that language to read them avidly. France, after all, was the center of the 19th-century universe in the arts and sciences, literature and philosophy.

The *ilustrados* who lived and studied in Paris no doubt learned to speak fluently with all the zeal necessary to prove the point that they were the equivalent of any European. The scene in the wildly popular film *Heneral Luna*, which features Antonio spitting venom in French at a British railroad master, is actually entirely accurate.

The *ilustrados* returned to Manila with all of the accoutrements of the *bourgeois gentilhomme* (the French of course having invented the term we've co-opted as "*burgis*"): Limoges china, Baccarat crystal, French and English silver, tableware and wonderful bibelots, books, paintings and sculptures, tapestries and candlesticks. They arrived with all the interests of the proper Victorian gentleman in languages, archaeology, and exotic travel, making Manila far more *Parisienne* than it was *Madriñena*.

The fabulously wealthy Paterno family was said to have imported the latest French fashions for its matriarchs and, finding that still somewhat wanting, sent for Parisian seamstresses to make up their ensembles.

A cinema, featuring the new-fangled technology of the Lumière Brothers, was on one end of the Escolta; La Estrella del Norte and other emporiums offered up cameras. The art of photography, one must remember, was also a French invention.

The *ilustrado* palate was also decidedly Parisian, with a taste for truffles, croquembouche (cream puff pastries), and wine. The menu of the landmark Malolos Congress dinner, faithfully revived by Sulipan descendant chef Gene Gonzales, fea-



CAFE SOCIETY

Juan Luna, with Jose Rizal and Valentin Ventura in fencing gear, in Paris. Below: Luna's Parisian Life captured his brother Antonio, Rizal and Ariston Bautista Lin eyeing a French lady.



tured an entirely French repertoire under the now-familiar motto "*Libertad, Igualdad, Fraternidad*" emblazoned on the menu card: "[Hors d'Oeuvres]: Huitres, Crevettes roses; beurre radis; olives; Saucisson de Lyon; Sardines aux tomates; Saumon Hollandaise. [Entrees] Coquille de crabes; Vol au Vent a la financiere; Abats de poulet a la Tagale; Cotelettes de moutons en papillote, pommes de terre paille; Dinde truffée a la Manilloise; Filet a la Chateaubriand, haricots verts; jambon froid-asperges en branche. [Dessert]. Fromages; Fruits; Confitures; gelée de Fraises; Glacées. [Vins]: Bordeaux, Sauterne, Xeres; Champagne. Liqueurs: Chartreuse; Cognac. Café, The."

Ambeth Ocampo supplied this lavish translation: "Oysters, prawns, buttered radish, olives, Lyon sausages, sardines in tomato sauce, and salmon with Hollandaise sauce. The main courses consisted of: crabmeat in its shell, filled pastry

shells, chicken giblets, mutton chops with potato straws, stuffed truffled turkey a la Manilloise (perhaps a pavo embuchado), beef filet a la Chateaubriand with green beans, and cold ham with asparagus. For dessert, there was an assortment of cheeses, fruit, jam, frosted strawberries, and ice cream. To wash down the seven appetizers, seven courses, and four desserts, one progressed from Bordeaux to Sauterne, Sherry and Champagne, then to the liqueur Chartreuse and Cognac, and finally to coffee or tea." The menu still reads like the stuff offered up in Manila's genteel homes on festive occasions.

The Spanish empire evidently was playing a catch-up game with France in the hearts-and-minds category. Having gotten wind of Eiffel's lavish plans for an all-steel tower, they likewise embarked on their own plans to construct an equally ambitious structure—the marvelous Cathedral of San Sebastian in Quiapo, intended to give praise to God rather than as an "empty adoration of materialism."

There were even rumors that Eiffel eventually partnered with the House of Ayala to build various bridges (It was with a Spanish steel-mill, in fact, but the historical errors can probably be accounted for by the mania for all things French). An enigmatic Frenchman named Pers Magin y Magin did, in fact, design the various lighthouses around Luzon, including the one on the Calatagan peninsula and another long gone, the San Nicolas, on the Manila Bay promontory.

Ironically, it was to be the Treaty of Paris between Spain and the United States, signed in 1898 in the *ilustrados'* beloved city, that would end the reverie of Philippine independence and seal our fate as an American colony. *Parisian Life* would become a prize-winning entry, not in the *ancien régime* salons of the *Académie des Beaux-Arts*, but at the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904, a showcase of American colonial pride held at—of all places—Missouri, USA (The painting was entered not by Luna, who had perished five years earlier, but by its owner Ariston Bautista Lin). Manila as *Parisienne* thereafter quickly morphed into a blowzy American broad, an unrecognizable creature straight out of *L.A. Confidential* and Scorsese's *Las Vegas*. It would take a horrific tragedy more than a century later to remind us that France will always remain pivotal in our political psyche. ■

That Erap Touch

Had it been Joseph Estrada's term during the APEC summit, rest assured the ousted president would have pulled all the stops to ensure a grand time. His former media affairs head sheds light on the host with the most

At the height of the Monica Lewinsky controversy, then-President Joseph Estrada was asked to comment on the Clinton sex scandal. A former actor who himself has had more than his fair share of leading ladies on and off screen, President Erap, as he was fondly called, replied with a serious face, "Clinton has scandal . . . I have sex!" The highs and lows of the presidency of Joseph Estrada, now Mayor of the City of Manila, might be debatable, but his entertaining skills, both on screen and off, are indisputably remarkable.

When my father, Ephraim Salcedo, brought me to meet him for the first time, for an endorsement for my 2007 congressional run for the 2nd district of Mindoro Oriental, Estrada was still in house arrest. We drove up the long and winding road to Tanay, Rizal, where the guy was detained after being ousted as president. Security was strict and there were only a handful of us for lunch at the Fishing Village section of Estrada's rest house, a miserably small number considering it was election season. His first words to me, said with an expression between smug and apologetic were: "Can you eat with your hands? Here we eat with our hands!" Then we partook of a boodle fight like no other: a most impressive feast of freshly grilled Filipino produce—*tilapia*, crab, squid, *liempo*—laid out on banana leaves that took the place of placemats and plates. By this time I was already a seasoned food writer, reviewing Philippine restaurants weekly for around five years, and noted that the food here beat the flavors of all other Pinoy restaurants I had ever eaten at.

After becoming head of media affairs of his political party and having been called to lunch everyday, I learned that the lunch buffets at the residence on Polk Street are sacred. You cannot disturb Estrada at this hour. No phone calls, no interruptions. He focuses on personally making sure that everyone is fed and fed well. Only he can give the go signal for when lunch is served and people can line up at the buffet table. Sometimes he even hands out the plates. Then, as he takes his seat, his hawk eyes survey what guests are eating. If you have just a few items on your plate, he either asks, "You don't like the food?" or "Are you on a diet?" And if he feels that you have served yourself too little, he will call his trusted butler Edwin

to add this and that. It is a real honor to get a seat at this lunch table. He invites only those he trusts.

What makes these luncheons even more special is that the menu is personally prepared by Erap himself, every single day. Come late afternoon, after calling it a day at work, he calls his cook Ador, asks what they still have in the kitchen, and then proceeds to personally write down the menu or, if mobile or abroad, dictates what to cook for the next day (even when away, he makes sure that his family and staff eat well). I had the privilege of witnessing him write down this daily menu during the 2010 campaign on days we would work overtime with the UP professor Danny Reyes to

His lechon baka is always paired with excellent red wine. Not Petrus. It's usually Chateau Montrose or St. Emilion for informal occasions. On special ones, he pulls out a first-growth Margaux.

finalize speeches. Erap writes them longhand, on a one-fourth sheet of paper. One to 10 items. (He has beautiful penmanship, by the way. One can imagine the love letters he sent to his first love, Dita, his girlfriend from high school.) He always made sure there was soup, vegetables (not necessarily salad), seafood, poultry, pork, and beef. Dessert is not part of the buffet but served a la carte when people are done eating. Many times it is Nathaniel's famous buko pandan. After eating, he offers coffee. "We have good coffee here," he always says. Then Edwin the butler comes out with a cup of Nespresso. Very George Clooney.

One late afternoon, knowing my penchant for food, he asked me to complete the menu list. I

suggested pochera, my favorite on the buffet, which uses a recipe by his mother, Doña Mary Ejercito, a known gourmet who made the wedding cake for the daughter of former President Elpidio Quirino. "No, pochera is only for Sundays," he said then, clearly a stickler for order.

He hates dishes that are fancy-shmancy. At one of my birthday dinners at Lemuria, when the waiter gave him the rundown of the components of a dish, as is fine dining practice, he scrunched his face and snorted, "*Ang dami namang eche bureche*." He is an advocate of simple but excellent Pinoy cooking. If you are lucky, you get to try his famous bacalao. It may be a little too salty for some, but he argues, "If it's not salty, it's not bacalao." Otherwise, you can expect the best kare-kare, pork chop, lechon paksiw, and adobo. Among all the adobos I have tried, I think the best in the country is at No. 1 Polk.

Once in a while, one might expect homegrown pigs from his farm in Tanay. Sometimes chicken inasal flown in from Bacolod, or maliputo from Taal, gifts from visiting friends. I remember always getting excited when Puerto Princesa's Mayor Edward Hagedorn would visit because he would always bring boxes of live lobsters.

In signature Erap style, dinners were no less meticulously organized. One of my first tasks as spokesperson and publicist was to put together a welcome dinner for Malaysia's former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. It was the first formal dinner Erap hosted after being released from house arrest.

It was practically a state dinner, although set in Estrada's home. The guest list was a tight 20 people led by former President Cory Aquino and select members of the Estrada Cabinet. We contacted Chef Billy King for a fine dining a la carte halal menu. President Erap is a big Billy King fan. He whipped up state dinners in Malacañang during the Estrada presidency and was later made executive chef of Tangerine, a short-lived Estrada-owned restaurant in Greenhills.

Not on the menu but always an element of any Erap dinner is his signature humor that always breaks the stiffness of the formal setting. As he had just been pardoned and Ibrahim had been released a few years later following false sodomy charges in Malaysia, Erap joked, "I am



an ex-Mayor, ex-Senator, ex-Vice President, ex-President . . . and now, ex-convict. But like my friend Anwar, who is also a fighter for real democracy, we were convicted only because we are men of conviction!"

After dinner, a pianist started playing on the grand piano beneath the life-sized Isabel Diaz portraits of President Erap and Senator Loi. No Erap event is complete without him singing his signature song, the Tagalog torch entitled "*Kabit Na Magtiis*," the lyrics of which he wrote himself while he was waiting to become Mayor of San Juan back in the late 60s, with music by Ernani Cuenco. After singing a couple of numbers, he convinced Anwar to sing as well, and we became witnesses to a rare moment in history: an international peace advocate gamely singing Elvis Presley's "It's Now or Never."

During less formal dinners, Estrada likes to serve *lechon baka*, with the whole cow roasted before our eyes. The beef is then served fresh off the spit. Forget Grade 9 Wagyu, the cow

served here is the bomb. Beef, whether *lechon baka* or steak for smaller affairs, is always paired with excellent red wine. Not Petrus. It's usually Chateau Montrose or St. Emilion for informal occasions. On special ones, he pulls out a first-growth Margaux. Contrary to the rumors that Erap would drink scotch until the wee hours, in the five years that I worked for him from 2008 to 2012, not once did he take a sip of whiskey.

He may dine with royalties and dignitaries, drink the best wine money can afford; still, Erap has remained down to earth. On his birthdays, which falls on April 19, he always has four celebrations: one with orphans at the Asosacion de Damas Filipinas orphanage in Manila, which his mother Doña Mary helped rebuild when it was burned down; another one with San Juan resettlers at Erap Village in Bgy. Napindan in Taytay, Rizal; then a rather fancy official birthday dinner on his birthday with family, former cabinet members, members of the Ateneo high school class of '55, showbiz

and political personalities, and friends; and finally a more casual dinner party celebration the next day with his San Juan political family and supporters, led by co-celebrant San Juan Mayor Guia Gomez, who was instrumental in Erap's 17-year career as mayor of San Juan. In each of them, the inimitable Erap charisma is on full display: the uncanny ability to make each person feel important no matter their ranking in the social order.

Snoobs have poked fun at his intelligence and called him *bakya*. Sometimes he even chimes in on these occasions, with self-deprecating humor. But he is far from the dunce critics make him out to be. Otherwise, he wouldn't still be at the top of his game both as public servant and leader, king and kingmaker, hosting luncheons everyday and dinners right and left. Beneath the toupé-looking hair—no, it is not a wig—and the orange daddy jacket is a true gourmet of Filipino food and connoisseur of fine wines, a man of wit and remarkable taste. ■

Smells Like Team Spirit

Since the American occupation, political parties in the Philippines have been indistinguishable from one another, each one nothing but a witty acronym boasting a cast of characters belonging to the same political stripes

The year was 1907. Our founding fathers were taking baby steps in electoral politics under the watchful eye of the Americans. The Philippine Assembly, the “practice” congress for the Filipino elite, was contested by two political parties made up of learned, distinguished gentlemen. The first, the Partido Federalista founded by Pedro Paterno (infamously played by Leo Martinez in the recent biopic *General Luna*), ran on the platform of statehood, not unlike presidential aspirant Ely Pamatong today. Opposing it was the Nacionalista, a party that included veterans of the revolution who by then had succumbed to the guided independence promised by the Americans and led by Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmeña. What better evidence of the undying patriotism of Filipinos than the trouncing in the polls of the Federalistas. Besides, even the Americans disliked the thought of bringing in another “negro” race, stateside.

The discredited Federalistas quickly rebranded themselves as the Progresistas, albeit with little success, while the Nacionalistas went on to dominate Philippine politics to this day. Yes, until now: all other parties that made it to the mainstream are, arguably, variants of the same party that brought Quezon and Osmeña to power.

The Liberal Party that came shortly after was merely a spawn. The year was 1946. The only way Manuel Roxas could run against the incumbent Osmeña was to break away from the Nacionalistas. And so he formed the Liberal Party, a group that remains the exclusive franchise of Mar Roxas’s family (his mother Judy is the grand dame of the LP). Although the NP-LP rivalry became the embodiment of the two-party system bequeathed by the Americans, there is in reality no equivalent in our politics of the Republican-Democratic divide of the US. Nothing that differed one from the other in a way that US Democrats and Republicans are



LIBERAL MINDED

To be able to run against the incumbent Osmeña in the 1946 election, President Roxas (seen here with Mrs. Douglas MacArthur) had to quit the Nacionalistas and create the Liberal Party, which remains the family's franchise to this day.

indelibly marked on matters like immigration, gun control, taxes, and family values. The Liberals and Nacionalistas were indistinguishable in their politics and economics. They were so alike that jumping parties was easy and effortless. The *rigodon* started by Mar's *lolo* has been played out over and over: by Ramon Magsaysay, the Liberal who turned Nacionalista and unseated Elpidio Quirino; Diosdado Macapagal, the Nacionalista veep who defected to the LP and defeated Carlos Garcia; and of course by Ferdinand Marcos, a Liberal who turned Nacionalista so he could run against Macapagal. Our electoral politics today is the sum of infighting and inbreeding.

This is why I think people who bewail the lack of clear platforms among political can-

didates running for next year's elections are suffering from misplaced expectations. They expect one political party to be different from the other. The thing is, not since the Federalista-Nacionalista rivalry were parties separated by platform. There are no socialists, leftists, or conservatives in our mainstream—they remain only in the fringes. The liberal democracy and *laissez-faire* capitalism the Americans tutored to our founding fathers still dominate our national life, and were only briefly interrupted by Marcos (still, with US blessing).

In 1972, when Marcos declared Martial Law and shoved aside the two-party system, he offered Filipinos a radically new platform: your personal rights for the promise of peace and

The better question is not why politicians don't talk about platforms—it's why voters have stuck with the same platform. Are we content with right-of-center?

Has the Left failed to seduce our people? Is their platform unappealing? Or are they just plain boring?

prosperity. Marcos also upset the old economic order by blaming oligarchs for the people's misery. His capitalism was the kind seen in East Asian countries under one-man rule—like Indonesia, Singapore, Cambodia—where the state and its anointed few were the engines of growth.

EDSA 1986 simply restored things to the way they were: The Philippine press once more became, to borrow from the *Philippines Free Press*, Asia's "freest" and "fightingiest"; mayors and congressmen became relevant again; the state got out of business, and privatization was held up as the truest economic virtue. While framers of the 1987 constitution dreamed of a multiparty nirvana, the political parties that have since morphed into countless acronyms are mere shades of the same political stripe. In 1986, Cory Aquino ran under UNIDO, or the United Nationalist and Democratic Opposition, a rebranding of Nacionalistas loyal to the Laurel family, giving the old party a broader appeal. Once seated, she turned the other way, to the old allies of Ninoy Aquino in the Liberal Party. The Laban party formed by Ninoy while in jail became the LDP, or the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, of the newly resurrected Congress. When Cory's anointed Fidel Ramos failed to get the LDP nomination from Ramon Mitra, Ramos walked away with a handful of LDP congressmen and formed his own party, Lakas. But the fortunes of these parties easily dissipated with the changes in Malacañang. In their wake, the Liberal Party of the original Roxas franchise is the party of the current political season. Its future, though, will most definitely depend on Mar winning in May next year.

Back in 2010, when billionaire Manny Villar contemplated the presidency, he acquired the NP franchise to give his ambition pedigree. The Villars even bought the old Laurel mansion along Shaw Boulevard. Villar lost. Today, the Villars still run the NP, but the mansion will soon give way to a condo development.

Because our candidates cannot disagree on political and economic principles, they resort to motherhood statements on corruption, employment, education, and criminality. Candidates can't even toe the line on finer issues like the

Freedom of Information bill and Marcos's burial at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. Voters, on the other hand, are left with nothing but character, personality, and track record on which to judge their candidates. Seen this way, there is rhyme and reason after all in our personality-oriented politics.

The better question is not why politicians don't talk about platforms. It's why voters have stuck with the same platform. Are we content with right-of-center? Has the Left failed to seduce our people? Is their platform unappealing? Or are they just plain boring?

The one bright spot in all this is "continuity." Those who whine that six years is not enough should see that while presidents change, policies remain the same. There's an upside to this. Defenders of a jailed Gloria Macapagal Arroyo say that P-Noy is reaping the fruits of the hard work done in GMA's time. Holiday economics and the conditional cash transfers are some of the economic practices carried on by a P-Noy government predisposed to blaming Arroyo for all that is wrong.

There is continuity, after all. This should comfort businessmen looking for stability and predictability.

Philippine elections are thus an occasion to switch leadership styles, discover new characters, reward track record, or simply change faces—and perhaps not unfairly so. We've changed personalities in the 29 years since EDSA. Every new president seems to be a polar opposite of the last one: from Cory, the inexperienced housewife and democracy saint, to Ramos, the uncharismatic and strategic-thinking, micro-managing chief executive; from the wildly popular but delinquent Erap Estrada to the unloved but hardworking GMA. Noynoy campaigned to be the opposite of Arroyo. He promised "*daang matuwid*," the righteous path, where Arroyo struggled from one scandal to another. P-Noy's lackadaisical style, though, is also proving to be the opposite of Arroyo's hands-on, always-around presidency.

We leave it to you, therefore, to imagine to what polar opposite voters will choose the successor of our present president. ■

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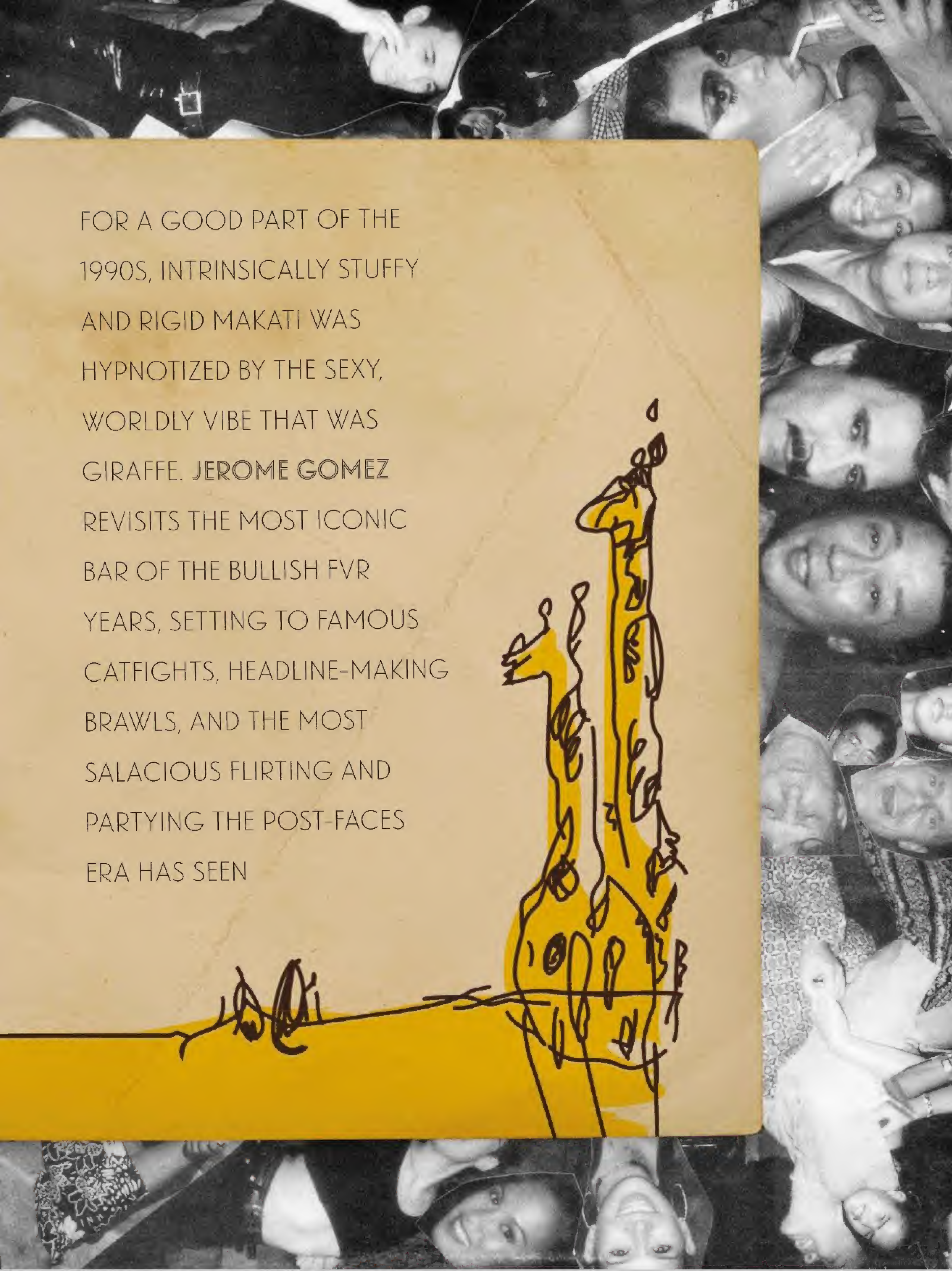
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STICK YOUR NECK OUT

INSIDE LOUIE CRUZ'S GIRAFFE



FOR A GOOD PART OF THE
1990S, INTRINSICALLY STUFFY
AND RIGID MAKATI WAS
HYPNOTIZED BY THE SEXY,
WORLDLY VIBE THAT WAS
GIRAFFE. JEROME GOMEZ
REVISITS THE MOST ICONIC
BAR OF THE BULLISH FVR
YEARS, SETTING TO FAMOUS
CATFIGHTS, HEADLINE-MAKING
BRAWLS, AND THE MOST
SALACIOUS FLIRTING AND
PARTYING THE POST-FACES
ERA HAS SEEN





The writer Krip Yuson once described it as “the epitome of Swing Scene Makati—as primary a meat market as its prime location.” The location being what was, at that time, Makati’s new prize corporate address: 6750 Ayala Avenue. The bar, its façade of tinted glass panels as minimally chic as the Optima typeface of its name above the entrance doors, stood right smack in the corner of the Glorietta area’s North and Office Drive, conveniently across the circular park where many a drunk expat would take temporary respite in the ungodly hours, and where the bar’s sexual hookups would move to be quickly consummated in the shadows, should the company privileges of the evening’s catch not include a room at the nearby Makati Shangri-La.

We are talking about Giraffe Bar and Grill, of course—or, because “grill” sounds a little too pedestrian in these post-Dencio’s years, simply Giraffe, the most iconic bar of the 1990s: the posh setting to many a high-profile catfight and headline-making brawl, romantic dalliance and sexual tryst, and some of the most unforgettable Saturday nights post-Faces Makati has known. “It was the best thing that came out of the Ramos administration,” wrote Teddy Boy Locsin then. However the inveterate opinion maker may have meant it, it was the FVR years and the economic climate they created—along with its bent on the era’s buzzword “globalization”—that allowed for, and fostered, the kind of sexy, swanky, cosmopolitan world that was Giraffe.

“I would go there seven days a week,” says the artist manager Joji Dingcong, as much a fixture at the bar as R.M. de Leon’s squiggly drawings of the towering spotted animal emblazoned on the establishment’s walls. Dingcong, then line producer for the concerts of Martin Nievera, was a *bagong salta* from Bacolod thrust into the Manila social scene. He found himself hanging out with a large group of partyphiles that favored the chichi, worldly environs of Giraffe. They were a spirited bunch that included pre-*Tatler* Anton San Diego, interior designer Anton Mendoza, actor Eric Quizon, man-about-town Pepper Teehankee, the realtor Johnny Velasquez and his partner Maripi Muscat, and a very young, new-in-the-scene Tim Yap who, in those

SINK OR SWIM

From top: The invite for Giraffe’s fifth anniversary party, a charity event that charged patrons an entrance fee of P500; the money was donated to ABS-CBN Foundation to help flood victims in 1999; the refashioned Giraffe in 6750 Ayala Avenue, which started as a restaurant in May of 1993. When the owners (Tony Boy Cojuangco, Al Tengco, and Ting Feliciano, among others) decided to turn the place into a bar, a state-of-the-art audio and video system was introduced, including JBL speakers, Cerwin-Vega bass and woofers, and Denon amps and mixers.

days, would arrive in a serious suit jacket, sometimes bringing flyers for events he cooked up—to the raised eyebrows of the black-clad, snooty *badings* sipping their vodka tonics by the ramp. “I would go there really to relax and have fun, and then still be able to show up for work the next morning,” Dingcong recalls. “You’re young, you have all the energy. On weekends, we’d go home and the sun was already out. It was hilarious. They were carefree times.”

“What I won’t forget about that place is that you could go alone and not care,” says P.J. Exconde, a former publicist who at one time wrote a society column for the *Sunday Times Magazine*. “Because you knew that whether or not you saw friends, you were bound to meet someone—not necessarily for sex—or a group of people whom you’ve never met before, and have fun with them. It’s not like [the scene] before I stopped going out where everything had to be planned. With Giraffe, everything was just spontaneous. You were just bound to meet someone, a friendly face, and just start talking and have drinks with them, and perhaps have an early morning meal as well. And for a bonus maybe be taken home.”



BRAVE SOULS CLIMB ON TOP OF TABLES TO DANCE TO SANTANA'S "OYE COMO VA." LARRY LEVISTE ONCE WROTE, "FOR A PLACE WITHOUT A DANCE FLOOR, GIRAFFE GYRATED LIKE A NERVOUS CALL GIRL AT 3 A.M."

On weekdays, the vibe would go from laidback happy hour to upbeat as the evening progressed, with suits from the nearby Stock Exchange buying each other rounds. But on weekends when the bar became everyone's last stop, it was a different story altogether. Revelers from Blue Café, Joy, or Insomnia in Malate, from ABG's in Pasong Tamo or Louie Ysmael's Venezia around the corner, or from pre-night out cocktails at home or a Consortium rave in some out-of-the-way warehouse—they all converged at Giraffe, filling up a space that would normally only comfortably fit 150 bodies with, well, 150 more. As soon as the clock struck 10, you'd have to elbow your way in—straight ahead and keeping to the left for the gay half of the room, and toward the right for the heterosexual half. This famous divide just sort of happened organically, as they say; there was no formal, official demarcation between sexual preferences there. As the evening soldiered on and more drinks were consumed, everyone mingled with everyone, the entire place an orgy of air kisses and meaningful glances, unfinished drinks and clouds of cigarette smoke (remember smoker-friendly Makati?), touching, and cupping, and pulling of hands for a quick round of sex—or blow—inside its infamous bathrooms. At the bar proper, as the limits of space allowed only for mild swaying, brave souls climbed on top of tables to dance to Santana's "Oye Como Va" or Hotdog's "Annie Batungbakal," played by the house DJ

EVERY REASON TO PARTY

Clockwise, from top left: The invite for the pyjama party encouraged female guests to come in nothing but negligees; the one time the bar allowed guests to wear shorts and slippers was at the summer party Louie Cruz cooked up; a Michael Jackson impersonator performs for the crowd; some of Manila's loveliest—including Bea Valdez and Claudine Trillo—perform waitressing services for a charity benefit on World Aids Day; the Santas cum waiters for the second bring-a-toy drive, among them Hans Montenegro and Robin da Roza.

Eric Maniquis. "Ay, *barwal ba*, Fritz?" a stunned Erich Edralin would ask Fritz Weber when the latter approached him after alighting from a table by the huge circular pillar. "No," the operations manager answered. "You should do it. In fact, we encourage you to do it." The idea being that the table dancing emboldened the women on the other side of the room to do the same.

"For a place without a dance floor," Larry Leviste once wrote, "Giraffe gyrated like a nervous call girl at 3 A.M."

GIRAFFE'S IMAGE AS Manila's tony, scintillating nightspot, it must be noted, was already its second incarnation. It began as a fine dining restaurant in May of 1993, under the ownership of Perfecto "Bubut" Quicho; Bill Cammack; Al Tengco; the father and son Felicianos, Mundy and Ting; a couple of doctor friends from Makati Medical Center; and a few other partners.





- A Ruffa Gutierrez and Tommy Tambunting
- B Doris Ho, Ginny Ledesma, and Conrad Onglao
- C Osang Yulo, Ace Suzuki, and Marit Yuchengco
- D Anton San Diego, Anton Mendoza, and Alvaro Pertierra
- E Ito Feliciano and Luis de Terry
- F Eric Quizon, G Toengi, and Joji Dingcong
- G Miguel Elizalde and Anne-Mette Elizalde
- H Louie Cruz and Ambassador J.V. Cruz
- I Don Escudero, Pepe Smith, and Larry Leviste
- J (Top row) Edu Manzano, Sara Jane Paez, and Chris Badiola; (second row) Lampel Luis, Gem Padilla, Jing Monis, Patty Betita; (bottom row) Tim Yap, Desiree Verdadero, and Leah Navarro
- K Concoy Tuason, Johnny Velasquez, and Al Tengco
- L Liza Araneta-Marcos and Annette Coronel
- M Joffy Cruz, Jami Ledesma, and Sarah Meier
- N Chito Melo, Antonio Garcia, Lorrie Reynoso, PJ Exconde, Cecille Reynoso, Joel Cruz, and Maurice Arcache
- O JR Isaac
- P Carla Reyes-Tengco
- Q Neny Montinola and Mandy Boy Eduque
- R Melanie Marquez and Anna Bayle
- S Malu Fernandez, Martin Nievera, Joji Dingcong, and Monsour del Rosario
- T Philip Cu-unjieng and Patricia Panlilio

As it turned out, Makati wasn't on the lookout for another fancy place to have power lunches, surrounded as it already was by a number of chichi dining choices and hotel restaurants with their own devoted following. That it had an inflexible chef—the Grand Hyatt Honolulu import Greg Montañes, a Mexican-American unwilling to compromise his five-star-hotel menu—didn't help the business. “The food cost was, I believe, about 70 percent [of the menu price], so naturally you couldn't survive. Since he wouldn't compromise by using other ingredients, then he had to go,” recalls Weber, who would join Giraffe as operations manager shortly after it switched into a bar.

Faced with what might be a losing business, the owners had to regroup. Quiet dining attracted too small a crowd, and an after-office throng willing to burn some cash couldn't be ignored, fired up as it was by the smell of prosperity in the air—imagined or not. Malate was having a revival as a party strip, confident in its carefree, bohemian allure. Makati, on the other hand, held on to its stiff, snooty persona. It needed a loosening up, a sense of fun. Or as one denizen graphically put it, “It needed to be fucked in the ass.”

Turning Giraffe into a bar would prove to be an inspired decision. The loosening up would be best illustrated by the old, cumbersome divider making way for a resplendent, gleaming oval bar that encouraged guests to go around it, make friends, form connections. The concept-change didn't seem palatable to some of the partners, so those not keen on the bar business bowed out, leaving only the five mentioned above to usher the business into its new chapter. Quicho sought out friends willing to bring in fresh capital. He found a savior in Antonio “Tony Boy” Cojuangco, then PLDT chair, who bought all the shares from the owners on their way out.

Almost at the same time it shifted gears, Louie Cruz joined Giraffe as its PR director upon Quicho's invitation. Son of J.V., the former Philippine ambassador to Britain, Cruz, a lifestyle columnist of Lopez-era *Manila Chronicle*, he of the off-the-shoulder blouses, was then best remembered for his Halakhakan parties, a series of soirees he organized after the Aquino assassination in '83. It was a way of cooling off the heightening tension between the Marcos and Aquino camps (he would invite prominent members of each camp to post-dinner drinks in some ritzy venue where they were expected to talk about anything but politics). A veteran party creature in the 80s, and an astute observer of society culture, Cruz was a brilliant addition to Giraffe.

“The first thing I did was invite the different groups within my circle of friends through a ‘leader’ of each group,” Cruz tells me. “And those groups represent different fields in society: the fashion designers, the business people, politics, people from entertainment.” Impressively connected, the mix of people on Cruz's first night was any upscale bar's dream crowd, among them the designer Budji Layug and socialite Eva Abesamis de Koenigswarter. The rest escapes Cruz now. By evening's end, everyone had a fabulous time, and the owners present, giddy about the turnout, decided dinner and drinks would be on the house. The memorable evening would plant a seed that resulted in each guest returning the favor by patronizing the place over and over, bringing along with them their equally glamorous friends who would in turn spread the word about the new happening hangout.

While the boldfaced names were a necessary ingredient for the bar's early success, so were the expats who frequented it. “The Philippines then was at its peak economically, so there were a lot of transient businessmen around

the Peninsula, the Shangri-La. Most of them, after work, or after a meeting, eventually ended up in Giraffe," says JR Isaac, a regular.

"They were the economic drivers, and we were trying to not be the sick man of Asia anymore," explains Dingcong. "These expats started going out, littering all our bars and clubs."

Their presence would become an essential ingredient in creating Giraffe's seductive urbane, international vibe. Coupled with society's crème de la crème—Baby Fores one night, Diana Jean Lopez the next, Cristina Valdez, Doody Tuason, and Menchu Soriano—it was a combination that attracted the rest of party-crazy Manila: yuppies, preppies, the beautiful people of the PMAP, or the Professional Models Association of the Philippines, Burgos girls and discreet call boys, tomboys and trannies, politicians and businessmen, cougars and DOMs, *artistas* and their cohorts. Cojuangco would bring Gretchen Barretto, who he was then still wooing. Melanie Marquez and Anna Bayle were at one time regulars. Pepe Smith would be seen partying with production designer Don Escudero. Rustan's Nedy Tantoco would walk in with Mario Katigbak. "Where else do you see senators schmoozing with cross-dressers, expats with boy toys, debutantes with movie stars, and PR queen Louie Cruz doing his famous finger lickin' dance?" wrote Leviste in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*.

Everyone was welcome until they were not. The Burgos girls looking to hook a client turned the *de buena* girls off, and the moneyed evil *badings* couldn't stand the sight and sound of the rowdy parlor gays. Weber recalls a very tall guy who used to come in very high heels. "He would sit at the bar drinking margaritas. The owners thought it was cool, it's fine, makes the place more cosmopolitan," the operations manager recalls. "Only problem is, as he got drunk, the low cut dress would reveal more of the boobs, until they

WHILE GIRAFFE DID start its life as a fancy dining spot, only when it was transformed into a bar did the name eventually suit its own skin. "It finally made sense," says Louie Cruz. "Because it was like a jungle, with all these predators and prey." Indeed, no other animal could have symbolized the Giraffe world better, itself a creature of beauty, elegance and allure, but also forever sticking its neck out, the better for calling attention and for spotting the night's would-be object of desire.

"There was really an undercurrent of sexual energy inside Giraffe," says Dingcong, "so if you stayed late and drank until 3 A.M., or what we call *hora de peligro* [hour of peril], it was already kind of a free-for-all, choose your own target." Even one of the bar's signature songs expressed outright libidinous declaration. Remember Mousse T's "Horny '98"? That was a big hit at Giraffe.

Cruz would be the silent witness to the nightly hunter-and-hunted goings-on, watching the proceedings from his elevated corner by the kitchen, his bottle of Fundador conveniently at arm's reach. Older men propositioning younger women, dusky women exiting the scene with white men, straight boys going home with gay boys. On some weeknights, when there wasn't much of a crowd, Cruz would send the best-looking man in the room a drink, with the instruction for the waiter not to mention who sent it. The idea being one more drink would make the guy stay longer, encourage him to drink some more, get him going, and with his confidence boosted introduce himself to a lady, or a group of ladies, thinking one of them his secret admirer. Eventually, he would buy them drinks. And everyone, including the cash register, was happy.

"It was always happy in Giraffe," says Alta Tan, the former model who worked as public relations officer at Faces before taking on the same hat

"THERE WAS REALLY AN UNDERCURRENT OF SEXUAL ENERGY INSIDE GIRAFFE, SO IF YOU STAY LATE UNTIL 3 A.M., OR WHAT WE CALL *HORA DE PELIGRO*, IT'S ALREADY KIND OF A FREE-FOR-ALL, CHOOSE YOUR OWN TARGET."

would already pop out." The male expats would be wowed, not knowing any better, and they would buy him drinks, "but the 'decent' girls wouldn't have any of it." Weber refused to mention the offender's name until I brought it up. Shola Luna, a ubiquitous character of the 90s club scene, often seemingly out of it but always a stunning figure in a dress, would eventually be banned from the premises of Giraffe.

If this were any other bar in Malate, such a sight was easily pardoned small stuff. But this was Makati, and behind Giraffe were not bohemians but serious, seasoned businessmen aware of the accumulated nuances that would cause a dip in their spreadsheets. When in the first few months the bar would hit highs of P200,000 a weekend night, on its fifth month it was bringing in less than half of that.

Soon, Weber would suggest to jack up the price of the beer and iced tea by 50 percent, weeding out the kids swept in by the joint's R&B music but would nurse only one glass for the rest of the night. Next, the bar would impose a dress code: no shorts except for women, no tank tops, no slippers. The designer Pepito Albert, who one evening realized too late he was wearing a pair of slippers, was once denied entrance; he walked back to his car without much fuss. More rules: men's shirts needed to have collars. And while it may not have been spelled out in the warning by the entrance: men's bottoms don't include skirts. Angelo Villanueva, a Malate regular, son of the former press secretary Hector, wore a skirt one evening and was stopped at the door. He, too, stepped back and took his business elsewhere. But just as Weber and his team thought that was that, the "scene," if indeed it was one, landed on the following week's gossip pages.

at the 6750 haunt. "*Kung may gulo man, naka-publish na 'yon agad*, and it's always talk of the town. Good or bad, it was still publicity."

Squabbles and fisticuffs would occasionally erupt, but what would be normal occurrence in other places was material for news, opinion columns, and gossip pages when they took place in Giraffe, owing to its high-profile stature and clientele. Remember the Pinky de Leon versus Alana Montelibano catfight in the ladies' bathroom? Or the night Claudine Trillo got involved in a hair-pulling and kicking incident with Ruffa Gutierrez, supposedly over the actor Zoren Legaspi, the former's then-boyfriend and the latter's ex? After the kicking and screaming, Melanie Marquez and Anna Craig came to the rescue and ended the catfight.

And then there was the famous brawl involving the actor Edu Manzano, then vice mayor of Makati. Weber recalls it thus: "Edu walked in from another party, with Maurice [Arcache] and certain models, and they walked straight to the ledge by the kitchen. A girl came up to him and made *beso* [on the lips], and as Edu was about to walk away to work the room some more, the guy [the lady's date] holds his arm. 'Hey, you just kissed my girl.'" The girl just turned out to be a fan who wanted a harmless kiss from a movie star/politico, but the jealous date wouldn't let it go. Thinking the guy wanted to indulge in a fistfight, Manzano proceeded to go outside. He had untucked his shirt and rolled up his sleeves, but his challenger refused to come out of the bar. So he went in again and looked for the guy. "I thought you wanted a piece of me," Manzano reportedly said when he found him. "So [Manzano] grabs him by the head and pulls him out," Weber continues. The guards quickly opened the glass doors, afraid the two men might smash into it. "*Natanggal yung shirt nung guy while he was pulling away* [from Manzano]."

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So party like a television's numero uno palangga, MAURICE ARCACHE laced with lads who are every woman's stocking stuffer desire: GRETCHEN BARRETTO, DENDEN ABESAMIS, CHRIS GARCIA, ALVIN ANSON, PACO GUERRERO, CHAD YPON, ANTON BORJA, BOOGIE BUGAYONG, AMIEL MARTIN, RON DE CASTRO and father and son team RAMON and ILLAC DIAZ. Hollywood may have JOHNNY DEPP and HUGH GRANT but we have our very own HANS MONTENEGRO and GRANT HARRISON to shake their potent cocktails for your intoxicating pleasure via STOLICHNAYA CRISTALL extra chilled from the north pole. Whisper your secret Christmas wishes to handsome business taipans JOE ZUBIRI, TING FELICIANO, RENE BANZON, FELIX BARRIENTOS and LUIGI ESTELLA. If you prefer water sports, request for your X'mas cruise on the yachts of the Greek tycoons PIERRE TOUNTZIS and NIKOS SAMARAS. They'll be serving you J & B JET but when the sun sets, it'll be J & B RESERVE.

THE IMPORTANT TOYS you bring will be received by seductive snowmen AL TENGCO, MONCH CRUZ, MONETTE GARCIA and PEEWEE AGCAOILI, but please do not take them home as your Christmas toy boys because they might melt in your hands. Ring-a-ling, hear them sing, members of the MAKATI CARES, MAKATISHARES FOUNDATION comprised of BONG DAZA, MAR ROXAS, BONG BONG MARCOS, EDVEE CRUZ, SANDY DAZA, BING DE GUZMAN, KATRINA PONCE ENRILE and PATRICIA CU-UNJIENG will be belting out remixes of SILENT NIGHT and JINGLE BELLS.

Capping this extra-special day are wonderful Wisemen BENJIE SEVILLA, LINO BARTE, PHILLIP RECTO, TONYBOY DE LEON and JOE LLEREZA to give you a partridge and a pear tree and five golden rings. Fulfilling your visions of sugarplums dancing in your head after hip hopping on table tops are DODI PUNO and ROBERT CRUZ. Raise a toast to this heavenly occasion with STOLICHNAYA CRISTALL and sit on the warm lap of Santa E.J. LITTON.

INTRODUCTIONS ARE IN ORDER

From top: A December 1995 invitation to the "Second Annual Toys R Us Christmas Ball" fundraiser enlists a choir that includes Bongbong Marcos, Mar Roxas, Edvee Cruz, Bong Daza, Sandy Daza, Bing de Guzman, Katrina Ponce-Enrile, and Patricia Cu-unjieng; Giraffe owners Bubut Quicho and Tony Boy Cojuangco, with Tony Boy's date Gretchen Barretto; a match box souvenir; Giraffe PR director Louie Cruz and owner Ting Feliciano.



The actor/politician would keep egging the guy on to throw a punch, but the opponent only managed to keep moving away from Manzano until he eventually ran off to the open parking lot across. When the incident made it to the papers, it was all blown out of proportion: that Manzano had asked the guy to kneel down in front of him; that the actor had pointed a gun at his adversary; that the guy was beaten up—Weber says while punches were thrown, none of them landed—and that the Giraffe guards graciously opened the doors to encourage Manzano's behavior. In an *Inquirer* interview, Manzano would say only pushing and shoving happened, an exchange of a few choice cuss words. He also said the guy did follow him out of the bar but only because Giraffe management asked him to, and that no fistfight transpired.

But while there were altercations—between a party columnist and a future online society gossip over the subject of one pointing out the other's fake Australian accent; between a call girl and a gay man caught in a game of "Who Got To The Foreigner First"—romance, too, blossomed. Dingcong remembers several pairings that began in Giraffe and ended in wedded bliss: like Laura Veralio and Juan Pablo Bertotto of the VMV skincare company, and the Filipina supermodel Anna Bayle and her American husband Simon Spence. "I've traveled all over the world and I would meet my man here?" Bayle asked Dingcong then, incredulous. "Darling, that's what's called Fate. Fate decides," the talent manager, who introduced the two, shot back.

And then of course, there were the parties. There were parties to raise funds for the Pasig River, for the children of Makati, for World AIDS Day. Cruz would round up some of Manila's loveliest women or handsomest men and make them part of the wait staff for one evening. The gimmick, of course, was a hit; once, Giraffe was able to donate more than a hundred grand to the HIV-awareness group Reach Out Foundation just by doubling the eve-

ning's tips. Cruz knew how to throw parties, and knew it always had to have beautiful men and equally beautiful women. When the women were there, the men would show up. And when the men showed up, the gays weren't too far behind.

These special parties that began in Giraffe's second year would put the bar back in excellent business. There was the summer party of 1997, which said "Come as you aren't" on the invitation. Cruz came as his bemoustached *palangga* Maurice, while a dozen men (half the wait staff included) donned Louie-inspired off-shoulders. There was the slumber shindig where the men came in pajamas and silk robes (as Cruz did, with only a mankini underneath), and where the more daring women wore nothing but negligees. "I taught Makati how to loosen up," Cruz once said in an interview. "I got rid of its constipated and stiffy air."

Makati on a bohemian high sounded too delicious to last. "It could have gone on longer, maybe four more years," Weber says. But it didn't. One day in 2002, like a jolt out of nowhere, Giraffe closed forever. Money was being stolen from the coffers, half a million in monthly sales, the owners found out after hiring an inventory firm. Weber confronted the staff but none of them would own up to the losses, until one day he heard a union was being formed among the employees. It was all the owners needed to hear to convince them to close shop. Nothing like mundane reality to wake one up from a hedonistic fantasy.

But thank God for the memories: of one last glass of Absolut tonic at 4 A.M.; of one famous gay man chasing after a guy around the Ayala Center rotunda because he wanted to have more drinks with him; of the duck pizza that never came; of being reprimanded by the vice mayor inside the men's bathroom for your coke-related indiscretions; of wives spying on their husbands by bribing the bathroom attendant; of wanting to join an inebriated Gabby Lopez dancing alone in the middle of the bar one slow weeknight; of Arcache greeting you with a smile outside the men's room cubicle, after you've spent an inordinately long time inside with a stranger; of smashing a glass onto an obnoxious white guy's face, and finding Monsour del Rosario behind you, taking your side; of Shola being welcomed back into the bar after one gay pride march in Malate. He was wearing a skirt that June evening, but Cruz managed to convince Weber to let him in. The minute he stepped onto the premises, of course, Shola being unpredictable Shola, took off his skirt to reveal a tanga. And out he went, with a bouncer on each side, back into the still, humid Makati night. ■

A ROGUE PORTFOLIO

THE NEW EVENING STANDARD

From an underground dance joint in Cubao to the pool club at The Palace, a new generation of concept-creators, established names in the club scene, and torchbearers of old Manila nightlife are giving us little excuse to stay home on a Saturday night

WORDS BY JEROME GOMEZ, JAM PASCUAL, AND MICHELLE AYUYAO

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PATRICK DIKNO & JL JAVIER



黑市

THE INNOVATORS

ANNA SOBREPENA-ONG AND ERICK ONG OF BLACK MARKET

For a long time, the conditions needed for Black Market to exist and thrive weren't quite right. One could say that its prototype, Erick and Anna Ong's other brainchild, was B-Side at The Collective, which opened in 2010. Created to be a bar where DJs could play what they couldn't elsewhere, B-Side was meant to lift clubbing culture to new heights. But the bar instead became a stronghold for the live band scene; its placement in the city attracting a different kind of crowd. EDM was still on the rise, and nobody knew what the hell trap music was. Erick and Anna had to regroup. Black Market, then still a spark in the brain, had to be as great as the couple's favorite clubs, among them Malate's old underground haunt Chemistry and The Shelter in Shanghai. "We actually didn't think of any option except this spot," Erick says, gesturing to the warehouse. The old black storage building—daunting with its steel build yet practically hidden from those uninitiated to Makati's urban sprawl—fit their vision. Ana, who handles the business side of Black Market, wanted a club "that didn't scream 'club'," while her husband, who takes care of artistic direction, saw the warehouse as the perfect place for a trap and techno scene to grow. Consider the birthplace of techno, industrial Detroit, and what a black warehouse in Makati could mean in the context of a constantly evolving nightlife culture. Black Market is currently two years old. Anna jokes that she isn't used to paying for her drinks anymore. On some nights, you'll see Erick playing obscure techno with a couple of rubber sex dolls hanging from the wall behind the booth. These days, funnily enough, EDM resides in the realm of cliché while trap music enjoys newfound recognition. But that's Anna and Erick for you—always 10 steps ahead.—JP

BLACK MARKET is at La Fuerza 2 Compound, Pasong Tamo, Makati



THE RULE BREAKER

ABBA NAPA OF BANK BAR

In the last three years, restaurant powerhouse The Moment Group has managed to build a gastro emporium. The admittedly unlawful trinity of Abba Napa, Eliza Antonino, and Jon Syjuco operated continuously on the cardinal rule of never, under any circumstance, creating something just for themselves. Instilled in them was the incessant need to fill voids in the blooming restaurant scene by creating unrivaled dining experiences; when all of Manila turned to western comfort food, they zeroed in on burgers by creating 8Cuts, and when Filipino diner chains were looking dated, they breathed new life into it with Manam. Then the triumvirate veered off-course by flirting with the idea of putting up a bar. “It used to be all about the discos,” says Napa of the evolution of Manila by night. “Then came the raves, then hotel bars after that. There was a healthy bar scene until there wasn’t one anymore. Suddenly you could only choose between large club or pub. So we thought, somewhere right in the middle of those two was where we would want to hang out.” You have to know the rules in order to break them, and in the case of The Moment Group, they consciously infringed their only one. A capricious act of selfishness, paired with the convivial desire to spawn something outside their doctrine, resulted in Bank Bar. Concealed behind the backdoor of a convenience store stockroom, Bank is part Berlin Wall, part cathedral in shambles, with an expanse of alcohol that covers most bases. Its identity lies in the fact that they have no clear one. In creating Bank Bar, The Moment Group may have departed from their sole dictum, but it had made them their own customers, filling a void they filled for themselves.—MA

BANK BAR is in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig

The property that holds Time today used to be—at least to those who remember—the nucleus of the 90s party scene. This was the pre-Internet age, the pre-event page era, and it was a time Jay Server, the owner of Time, knew well. Previously the owner of Club Mars which used to stand where Hotel Celeste now operates, Server was well-acquainted with the 90s club scene and recognized its demands. Music couldn't be easily downloaded, so he would travel abroad to buy records, even going so far as to buy Daft Punk's *Discovery* album at a music festival in Rimini, Italy. The scene was smaller, the culture more tightly knit, and everybody knew everybody. Compare that to the party scene today, one whose tribes thrive on large venues, EDM, and DJ requests, Time, by contrast, is more underground, more niche. Server intended the club to be, first and foremost, a space where less mainstream genres of music could be played—house, trance, the kinds of sounds you probably wouldn't find in today's standard nightclub. “We do not take requests, we do not play what the other clubs play; we have our DJs,” says Server. “We control the music—the crowd doesn't control the DJ, the DJ controls the crowd.” Time has stood for about five years now, and through those years Server has remained consistent, choosing not to follow trends but to establish a distinct culture, one that prioritizes music, and dancing, and not the plain hedonism other clubs seem to pride themselves on. Time and Server, by virtue of integrity, represent how multifaceted the party scene is, and always has been.—JP

TIME is at 7840 Makati Avenue, Makati

THE CONTROLLER

JAY SERVER OF TIME

THE REVELERS

MON PAPA AND RUPERT ACUÑA OF O BAR

O Bar is, of course, a gay club, easily the only one standing of its kind in the metropolis. Celebrating its 10th year this month, their staying power, says co-owners Mon Papa and Rupert Acuña, stems from the fact that they're always upping their game, stepping up to the whims and tastes of O's devout patrons since they opened on the corner of Orosa and Nakpil Streets during the last breaths of bohemian Malate nightlife. They have since moved out—blame it on the crime rates, frequent flooding, and the general bureaucratic difficulties of acquiring business permits in second-term Limera Manila—and moved into the Ortigas Home Depot compound where they are currently on their third location. From a small second floor bar that allowed for a tiny stage that could only fit solo acts, O now operates in a space outfitted with VIP cubicles, an expansive bar, a theater-size stage and a dressing room area for its dancers and drag performers. Their musical revues continue to be a hit among locals and foreign guests (O is one of the first things to come up on Trip Advisor when one Google-searches for things to do in Manila). “The performers undergo classes in ballet and diction,” notes Acuña who is the joint’s artistic director and a trained dancer. Papa and Acuña are products of early 80s Malate clubbing, the era of Ernest Santiago’s Coco Banana, then the beating heart of seductive and flamboyant Manila gay nightlife. Friends from that time show up regularly at O (such as Louie Cruz) but also there are the celebrities of *Manille de la presente*. Anne Curtis had at one time agreed to come up onstage (and camped it up on a number that involved a shower), as did Jessy Mendiola one early morning with friends. Their landlords, the Ortigas, like the O guys because they bring in the crowd with purchasing power, be they straight—Jay Server told us he took off his shirt there recently—or not. “We started like any other bar, where everybody’s welcome,” says Papa. “Just like it is today.”—JG

O BAR is at Ortigas Home Depot, Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas, Pasig





If one were to base it on the previous bar he opened, the highly successful Finders Keepers in Pasong Tamo, one would be surprised at Andrew Garcia's second: the Bonbon Club, located just off Dela Rosa Street in Makati, fairly new but already attracting a fashionable crowd and the dress-shirted yuppies in the Legaspi neighborhood. While Finders is party music and millennial chatter going head to head, dark with practically just its neon signage lighting up the room, Bonbon is a little bright and airy—though smaller in size—and chill, decorated by Garcia's co-partner Borgy Manotoc as if he just pulled out random fixtures from the houses the owners grew up in. "When I still had a corporate job, the most recent one in advertising, at around four or five in the afternoon, you hit that wall and you want to get away. You're not necessarily done working but you might want to blow off some steam, take some colleagues with you and try to get creative," says the boyish and soft-spoken 30-something. "That's kind of the inspiration behind a place like this. It can open early, it's quiet, you can think of it as your living room or lounge." Bonbon is a gin bar, by the way, and by "get creative" Garcia means to explore the wide, wonderful world of gin that was opened to him about five years ago and that he's brought to Manila via Bonbon. As the guy who runs the Asia Pacific business of Don Papa Rum, Garcia is constantly updated in the goings on in the liquor business and privileged to travel quite often. It was on these trips where he started his education on gin—which is currently experiencing a revival in the US East Coast and parts of Europe, and having a bit of a moment in the Singapore, Hongkong, and Japan nightscape. These days, the twinbill concepts Garcia owns afford him to indulge his mood swings. If he's feeling like an early cocktail on a late weekday afternoon, it's Bonbon. If he's feeling a little festive, it's his bar off Pasong Tamo. His other moods? Well, they're about to be addressed with two more concepts soon to be added to his portfolio.—JG

THE BONBON CLUB is at Tropical Palms, Gallardo St., Legaspi Village, Makati; FINDERS KEEPERS is at La Fuerza 2 Compound, Pasong Tamo, Makati



ANDREW GARCIA OF
THE BONBON CLUB
AND FINDERS KEEPERS

THE MOOD SHIFTER

THE KING

ERIK CUA OF THE PALACE



From his first bar, called Club Basement at Eastwood City, to the era-defining superclub Embassy, to the nightlife multiplex that is today's The Palace, Erik Cua is clearly not a guy to rest on one's previous achievements. "With each project, I like to get bigger," he says. And The Palace is the biggest of them all, the biggest nightlife space in Asia certainly, housing four establishments under its sprawling roof—the dance club Valkyrie; The Pool Club, the first day club in the country akin to the pool bars in Las Vegas and Ibiza; the Naya Café under Chef Mikko Reyes, which services the dining needs of the entire multiplex; a microbrewery called, well, The Brewery; and Revel, a mammoth lounge that crammed Manila's glamorous set into its by-invitation opening recently. Set to open in a matter of months are two more concepts that will finally complete The Palace. It's putting together concepts and designing his establishments that give Cua the most thrill. Not even a failed venture could dampen the guy's spirit (remember the much hyped but short-lived Member's Only?). It pays that he has his business partners and a great team who helps him make things happen, among them party legend Louie Ysmael, stakeholder at Valkyrie, mentor, and friend. He first met Ysmael when he opened Temple Bar in Greenbelt in the early 2000s. "I would see him at Nuvo and I would get intimidated, because I was just then trying to compete with them, trying to get into the market," Cua recalls. Now they sit at the same table for dinner, run together, and even travel once in a while. It's been said before: Erik Cua is his generation's Louie Y—except the mentor still goes out more often than his apprentice. "He loves what he does and I love what I do," Cua says. Apart from The Palace, his empire includes Epic and Tides in Boracay, and 71 Gramercy in Makati. What exactly is the best thing about his job? "I love doing it and I love being good at it."—JG

THE PALACE is at 9th Avenue cor 36th Street, Uptown Bonifacio, Taguig



THE FUTURISTS

CHIE, LEAH AND AUSTIN CASTAÑEDA, SAMANTHA NICOLE AND SHARON ATILO OF TODAY X FUTURE

Believe it or not, Today x Future used to go by a different name. Sharon Atilo founded a store called I Love You over seven years ago that meant to double as both a café and a bar. Somewhere along the way, Leah Castañeda decided to leave her position of managing The Dawn, growing a little too tired of the late night gig circuit grind. Atilo and Castañeda partnered up, and the store changed its name again. “Let’s go to our future!” was the tandem’s rah-rah attitude. The store became a full-fledged bar-slash-club, and lived its first three years in Cubao X, which should be enough to tell you what kind of life the space lived in its youth. “We were on until seven in the morning,” says Castañeda. “Some people would stay that late, ’til the sun.” Eventually, landlord pressure forced the two to move shop and end up just a stone’s throw away, in Gen. Malvar Street, next to a pawnshop, where they’ve been for the last four years. There’s a little more freedom now for Atilo, Castañeda, and their gang of DJs and events organizers (pictured with them here), who get to keep the club going until four in the morning, hosting its loyal following of hipsters and club kids, attracting artists (Luis Santos, Cos Zicarelli, Dex Fernandez), celebrity visits once in a while (Jasmine Curtis-Smith in its last anniversary, John Lloyd Cruz one drunken night), the Syquia crowd, the party photographer Eddie Boy Escudero when his favorite costumed club kids are bound to show up. And though the club has taken on many different forms, vestiges of its past life still remain. A small library stands next to the bar, recalling its days as a café. Juxtapose that with the club’s legendary disco ball, hanging and spinning every night against the black light. One would be hard-pressed to find anyone else who would put these two things in the same place, but for Atilo and Castañeda, Today x Future as we know it, well, today, wasn’t created on purpose. “Nothing’s really planned out. What we want to do just happens, and we work with it,” says Atilo. Makes sense. Planning just seems redundant. The future is always happening. —JP

TODAY X FUTURE is at Gen. Malvar Street, Cubao, Quezon City

Of the establishments in this portfolio, it is Bar 1951 that has the deepest history, its precursor being the great Penguin Café still remembered by many an artist, writer, and performer of note as the quintessential Malate bar for more than two decades until it closed doors in 2008. Penguin was originally located in the corner of Adriatico and San Andres Street where one of 1951's owners, Butch Aldana, grew up. He would become a regular in its second location, near the Remedios Circle, in the 90s where he would hang out with his comrades Gus Albor, Diokno Pasilan, and Santi Bose. When he took over the reins from its previous owner, he changed the name to Rockola Café, except no one else bothered to call it that. "The one thing I love about Penguin is its authenticity and attitude," he said once. "You can come as you are and in the process become someone else." To this day, that spirit of Penguin still lives in 1951—although oldtimers still refer to it as the new Penguin even if the name-change is now four years old. The bar remains a venue to support the local art scene and local musicians. There's always a new collection of paintings or photographs on the walls. There's always a band playing: Flippin' Soul Stompers (funk and soul), Coffeebreak Island (reggae), Lagkitan (blues). A musician himself—he used to play percussion for the old Pinikpikan band—Aldana is keeping the place alive so he can continue supporting local bands even if business is sometimes not all that brisk. While most of Malate has given way to soulless bars and Korean diners, Aldana and Gonzales seem to have taken it upon themselves to play the torchbearers of the Malate of old, not only for the occasional Indios Bravos or Penguin alums looking for a semblance of their younger days, but for a younger crowd who have yet to experience the essential Manila by night.—JG

BAR 1951 is at 1951 Adriatico Street, Malate, Manila

THE GUARDIANS

ERIC GONZALES AND
BUTCH ALDANA OF
BAR 1951



MANDALAY is at 100 Don
Carlos Palanca St., Legaspi
Village, Makati (inside The
Belle and Dragon)





We've always wanted to open a whiskey bar, but we've always wanted to do it a certain way, to tell a story," says Luigi Tabuena, creative director of Mandalay Whisky and Cigars. The guy can't help it, telling a story: Outside of the food and beverage trade, he is a film, TV, and commercial director. Hence, entering Mandalay's doors (fashioned like a vintage Oriental cabinet) is like stepping into a movie set. The bar's name is taken from the eponymous Rudyard Kipling poem, about a British soldier longing for his days in the East, enamored as he was by its culture and its women. Mandalay is an exoticized idea of the bygone opium den, with calculated touches of Art Deco, which makes for its decidedly worldly atmosphere. Black leather couches everywhere, handsome Prizmic and Brill bar stools, a pair of black marble foo dogs from Vietnam guarding the bar, weighing two and a half tons each. Indy Villalon, the executive chef and Tabuena's creative collaborator on Mandalay (and on the English pub attached to it called The Belle and Dragon) says they have the deepest list of whiskey brands hereabouts. One is encouraged not exactly to consume as many bottles as one can, but to, as they would say in the movies, journey through it, the various whiskey regions, from Japan to Scotland to India (the Amrut Fusion, from India, with its surprising citrus notes and long orange finish, is currently Villalon's favorite). Both perfectionists, Tabuena and Villalon held on to their concept for more than three years until they finally found the perfect location, an old office building in the heart of Palanca Street in Makati. Everything looks exquisite here, and the selection of whiskeys staggering. The "spiritual advisor"—because he is in charge of the spirits—is Lee Watson, the same guy who created cocktails for the Lanai Lounge of Antonio's in Tagaytay. Says Tabuena, "We have thought everything through to really offer the best possible experience." If indeed Mandalay is a story, it sounds like one you'll keep revisiting. —JG

LUIGI TABUENA, MIGUEL GERHARDT, INDY VILLALON, ARMAND DEL ROSARIO, NICCOLO MAGSINO, RAFFY ZAMORA, AND LEE WATSON OF MANDALAY

THE STORYTELLERS

A full-body portrait of a woman with dark hair pulled back, looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a long, grey, oversized coat with wide lapels over a matching grey dress with a high slit. Underneath the coat, a light-colored bra is visible. She is wearing a ring on her left hand. The background is a solid light blue.

THE *HEART* WANTS

WHAT IT WANTS

Heart Evangelista has spent her latter years in showbiz languishing in so-and-tier teleseryes and untangling herself from the lecherous controversies thrown her way. But now that she's had her share of triumphs—finally marrying the man she fought for (vice-presidential candidate Senator Chiz Escudero) and beginning a career in art—is she finally turning her back on showbiz? Don Jaucian finds a woman who has, at last, found what it means to be free

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK NICDAO / STYLED BY PATRICK GALANG



BEA SAMSON WOOL
SLEEVELESS TURTLENECK,
KARE MILLEN KNITTED
CARDIGAN, OPPOSITE: FLOAT
DEEP V SWIMSUIT, PREVIOUS
PAGE; JOSEPH DOUBLE
CASHMERE LISA LONGCOAT
FLOAT SWIMSUIT





JOSEPH ASYMMETRIC
SWEATER. CHARLES &
KEITH SLIP-ON FLATS

THESE DAYS, HEART EVANGELISTA WAKES UP WITHOUT A HUSBAND.

Having a senator and vice presidential candidate for a spouse has its own share of merits and risks but as next year's national elections inch closer towards its melting point, she braces herself to see less and less of Chiz Escudero.

Their usual routine commences as thus: by 4:30 A.M., Escudero is up, setting off toward a string of meetings, events, and sorties until he comes home after dinner. Sometimes, he skips supper in lieu of more meetings, where Evangelista will serve them some grub until they end around midnight. It can be tough, she says, but she consistently mentions her support of her husband even though he refrains, as much as possible, from bringing politics into their married life.

This is a point the actress hones in whenever I ask her about her plans for this gathering political storm. Surely, there is a strategy in the works, with the official campaign period only a few weeks away. But she insists that it's only Escudero who braves the battlefield. For both of them, there is a clear delineation for their respective professions; the home is sacred, it is a safe haven where familial ties thrive more than anything else.

"Before, we would start talking about politics and I'd start to get really involved because it was becoming kind of like a *teleserye* to me. One time, [I told him] 'Babe, this is what I heard, this is what I read,' and he told me, 'Babe, slow down. The reason that I married you is I wanted a normal life outside of what I'm doing and you're kind of getting into it too much.' (Laughs) So I stopped," she says.

Evangelista is still hesitant about her future as a vice president's wife. Not because she doesn't want it or doesn't see it materializing, but it is something that is far beyond the scope of her reality. There will be parties, lots of them, charity events, appearances, and public scrutiny. She is still unsure if she's ready for all of this.

"I think I want to keep my life as normal as possible. I wouldn't mind hosting [parties] but I don't know if they'll ever be that big. That's a totally different world. I'm a very shy person. Funny because I'm an *artista* and people think that I'm a socialite or whatever. My husband's also not like that. He's a politician, but people know him as someone who doesn't go to certain events—he likes staying at home in his *tsinelas* and shorts."

She emphasizes this streak of normalcy throughout our interview. Holed up in a studio's dressing room, with barely an entourage around her, it's apparent how she is trying to shun the usual accoutrements required of a celebrity's lifestyle. She used to have bodyguards who, I assume, have since been discarded (these bodyguards were even present during her first date with Escudero, who had none). They are both aware of how people expect them to be. They are, after all, a couple hailing from two cataclysmic worlds and Escudero's run for the state's second highest position should have sent Evangelista scrambling for tailored suits, structured coats, and various other power dressing ensembles, think *House of Card's* Claire Underwood.

What she tells me might just be a cross between the safe showbiz answer and a stern disapproval for the spectacle of celebrity-style electioneering: "I want people to listen to him and not to make *pa-picture* to an *artista*. I want them to hear him, so that's why I felt maybe it's not right [if he brings me with him]. Only if he can't go to a certain place and he's invited that's the only time I'll go [to represent him]. I kind of appreciate that because a lot of people say that he got married to an *artista* because he's running for something. Totally untrue. And that's what we plan to do."

It's no secret that Evangelista has had a middling career as an actress. Her formative years began her skyrocket to fame, gamely taking on roles that weren't too far from herself: candidly *kikay* and unerringly optimistic. Her latter years, however, haven't produced a strong and iconic character that she'll be remembered by yet.

"I'm still looking for that [role]. I don't think they'll ever remember you. There's just so many beautiful women. Showbiz, they'll forget about you. They'll fall in love with somebody else, they can replace you just like that. That's why I started to fall in love more with painting because it freezes your emotions, what you're imagining, what's in your mind that other people cannot see. Even when you die, it will become more precious to people. That's why with painting, I've become addicted to it, because it immortalizes you forever. I'd rather people remember me by my paintings."

The parallels of art and fame's shortcut to eternity isn't lost on Evangelista. Actors and actresses have emblazoned pop culture with powerful portrayals that have endured for years and years. The difference though is how transient everything can be these days; everything lives and dies at such a rapid pace. And for someone like her, who still cringes at kissing scenes and hasn't had a love scene—ever ("When I'm in love with someone, I'm just in love with that one person. I've never been the type to feel that I'm in love with my co-actor")—it's likely that the overlords of the entertainment industry will favor another budding starlet who's willing to do it all.

"I've lost a lot of roles because of my limitations. I've had my heart broken many times because I was rejected many times. 'You don't do this role, you don't do this way, then you're out.' In short, I've had enough of the heartbreaks of showbiz."

Now that's she's wrapped up her last soap (she's planning to take on fewer acting gigs in the coming years), she's finally free to fully don her artist's hat. Clients send her Hermès and Prada bags to paint on. She has an upcoming exhibit at the Ayala Museum this February (her second time), where her works will center on fishes, as inspired by her many fishing trips with her dad. She's just released a beauty book and a storybook, *Daughter of the Sun and Moon*, which she illustrated and features The Girl, a figure prominent in her paintings. "I think The Girl symbolizes the emotions that I was feeling at the time. In connection to me being an actress, it's all about the face: the feel of the face, what she's projecting."

Evangelista is now 30 and has spent 17 years of her life under the public eye. Now that she's asserted her newfound freedom, lovingly translating her hopes and fears onto canvases, she feels she's finally hit her stride as a woman in charge of her own fate. Her responsibility as a wife has taught her discipline and has given her a chance to do everything in her own way.

"I've just fallen in love with something else, and I'm lucky that I fell in love when everything was still good and not because I had no choice. Not everybody gets that kind of transition smoothly. My timing with everything, from my marriage to having the right guy, is just perfect, so I'm really lucky that that happened. So I'm not so afraid of saying goodbye." ■



MAKEUP BY ALBERT KURNIAWAN / HAIR BY JERRY JAVIER

STYLIST ASSISTED BY JANA SILAO & SAM CADUNGOG

PHOTOGRAPHER ASSISTED BY JACK ALINDAHAO, JAMES BAUTISTA, CHRIS SOCO, ROBBIE BECROFT, AND EGOY

DIGITAL IMAGING BY CARLO SARDES / MOOO DIGITAL PRODUCTIONS

"I WANT PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO HIM AND NOT TO
MAKE *P1*-PICTURE WITH AN *ARTIST*!... PEOPLE SAY
THAT HE GOT MARRIED TO AN *ARTIST*! BECAUSE HE'S
RUNNING FOR SOMETHING. TOTALLY UNTRUE."

JOSEPH SOFT LEATHER SLEEVELESS TOP, CAMEO LITTLE LOVE SHORTS, CHARLES & KEITH TWO-STRAP SANDALS. OPPOSITE: JOSEPH ORGANZA JACKET.





JOSEPH MILITARY
JACKET, FLOAT DEEP V
SWIMSUIT, SUNE SILK
SHORTS, ERICKSON
BEAMON BEJEWELLED
TASSLE EARRINGS



JOSEPH ORGANZA
JACKET, EVE SILK
TOP, SUNE SILK
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KEITH ANKLE-STRAP
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"HE TOLD ME, 'BABE, SLOW DOWN.
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JOSEPH DOUBLE CASHMERE LISA LONGCOAT, FLOAT SWIMSUIT, CHARLES &
KEITH SLIP-ON FLATS OPPOSITE: FINDERS KEEPERS SWEET TALKER DRESS





GOODBYE TO

While she has long captivated the public as one of Truman Capote's swans, the sister of Jackie Kennedy, and a European princess—with romantic liaisons from Peter Beard to Aristotle Onassis, and close friendships with Andy Warhol and Rudolf Nureyev—not one of those labels begins to capture the true woman. On the occasion of her recently published book, the inimitable **Lee Radziwill** offers Nicky Halsam a rare, personal glimpse into her remarkable world

ALL THAT







Ooh. You're here already!" The voice, lively, with its unmistakable husky drop, comes in to the living room. I turn from the balcony that looks out onto the Avenue Montaigne.

"Ooh"—again, that low last note—"how did you get here so quickly?"

Framed in the evening light, between double doors, is a figure slight as swan's down, a silhouette in dark, skinny Armani pants and a silk T-shirt. The hair, cut for over half a century by the experts in at least two continents, is now a sleek chignon, blond, perhaps, with the light around it, darker as she moves toward me. I explain that the Eurostar now has a service where you order a taxi on the train and, hey, presto! At the Gare du Nord, there is a driver, bearing your name.

"Really? I didn't know that. I must go to London more often. I know, I should, but I am so, so happy in this apartment. . . . If I can wade through the scores of Japanese kids fighting their way into Chanel."

The haunting voice and the almost ethereal figure belong to Lee Radziwill, and they have been a lifelong part of her enduring identity. But those characteristics are not nearly the whole picture. I am confronted by a subtly strong presence and personality, part wreathed in the glamour of the past, part intensely modern in outlook and awareness. Not for her any all-too-easy reminiscences of "those days." She is, quite clearly, herself.

In a world of passing celebrity, Radziwill, 79, possesses a timeless aura that radiates nowness. Her bang up-to-date personal style and her laid-back—to say "pared down" would be to demean its ordered luxury—apartment in Paris ("the favorite of any home I've ever had") show how subtly she has lived and lives now, without the attendant glare of past pomp and present self-glorification that others crave. She is utterly content, and it shows.

What she is not is casual. She regulates her life by standards inbuilt by experience, by nurturing her friendships, by staying true, by her irony, by her humor—all qualities that show she is the real deal. That past sorrows and



LIFE AS SHE KNEW IT

Clockwise, from top left: With close friend, Russian dancer Rudolf Nureyev, with whom she was believed to have had a long-standing crush on; shopping in Capri with sister Jackie Onassis, August 1970; on the pages of Andy Warhol's *Interview* magazine, March 1975; with the writer Truman Capote at the Four Seasons in New York, 1969; the July 1967 *Life* cover that announced her debut as star of the stage. Owing to her popularity, the play was a hit, but her performance was generally panned by critics. "It is difficult for someone raised in my world to learn to express emotion. We are taught early to hide feelings," Lee told a columnist after the reviews were out. *Opposite page:* Photographed by legendary paparazzo Ron Galella in Manhattan, October 1972.





THE PRINCESS LIFE

In London with her husband, Polish prince Stanislas "Stas" Radziwill (third from left), and director Roman Polanski (far right), 1965. *Below, from left:* A collage from her book *Happy Times*—Lee's son Anthony with Warhol, who owned the Church estate in Montauk (his neighbor was the photographer Peter Beard, with whom Lee would strike up a romance), and Lee with Capote.



"I WASN'T A PATCH ON MY SISTER. IT WASN'T MUCH FUN GROWING UP WITH [MY MOTHER] AND HER ALMOST IRRATIONAL SOCIAL CLIMBING."

joys have merged into an elegance that permeates her presence, that "something in the air" that indicates class and courage and composure. Though she now rigorously guards her privacy, her free spirit surfaces easily, and her thoughts come crystal clear. A figure of her time, our history, Lee is her own harbinger for an iconic future. Ours, and hers.

One sees why Lee is happy. The apartment—just high up enough to encompass most of the most famous Parisian landmarks, low enough to allow her to sometimes use the stairs to walk Zinnia, a wriggling bundle of snow-white fur—is tailor-made for her lifestyle. The living room is a symphony of light, white, the deep pink of falling rose petals. Around the fireplace, a banquette and armless chairs, covered with crisp white linen printed with tumbling Asian figures ("They go everywhere with me, every house, my apartment in New York, my little men") and against the far wall, a sofa of luscious rose silk, thick and ribbed, its back a relaxed baroque scroll. The art on the walls is mostly contemporary, mostly monochrome, most signed, and all highly personal. The flowers, two low glass cylinders, a massed spectrum of pinks and reds ("The man who does them for Dior brings them") fill the Parisian dusk with their heady scent.

"Come sit," Lee says, folding her legs into the sofa's cushioned recesses. "Some vodka?"

"Sure!" Over her shoulder to an unseen presence, "*Seulement de l'eau plate pour moi.*" Near her is a photograph, recently discovered, sent to her: Lee in a column of brilliant red taffeta couture, at the height of her astonishing beauty. She has no recollection of where it was taken or when.

"Were you always aware of your beauty?"

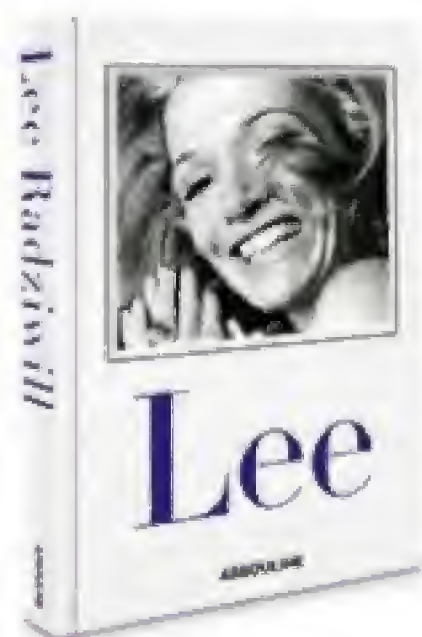
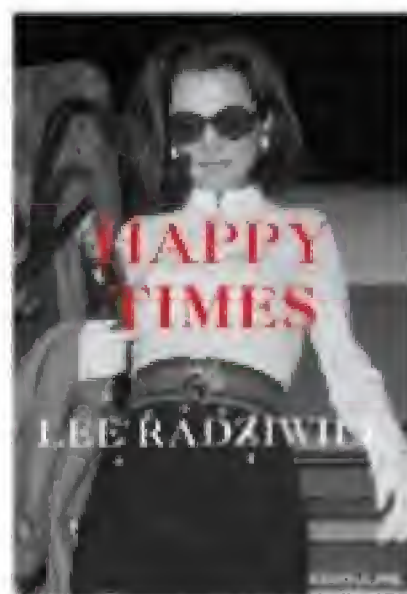
"From the word go," she answers simply and honestly. "But no one else was, then. My mother endlessly told me I was too fat, that I wasn't a patch on my sister. It wasn't much fun growing up with her and her almost irrational social climbing in that huge house of my dull stepfather Hughdie Auchincloss in Washington. I longed to be back in East Hampton, running along the beaches, through the dunes and the miles of potato fields my father's family had owned. And even in summer, when we'd go to Hammersmith Farm . . . the Auchincloss place in Newport, a house more Victorian or stranger you can't imagine . . . it wasn't much better. Well, at least there was the ocean, but naturally my sister claimed the room overlooking Narragansett Bay, where all the boats passed out. All I could see from my window was the cows named Caroline and Jacqueline (My real first name is Caroline).

"Oh, I longed to go back, to be with my father [John Vernon Bouvier III]. He was a wonderful man, you'd have loved him. He had such funny idiosyncrasies, like always wearing his black patent evening shoes with his swimming trunks. One thing which infuriates me is how he's always labeled the "drunk black prince." He was never drunk with me, though I'm sure he sometimes drank, due to my mother's constant nagging. You would, and I would. The only time I ever saw him really drunk was at Jackie's wedding. He was to give her away, but my mother refused to let him come to the family dinner the night before. So he went to his hotel and drank from misery and loneliness. It was clear in the morning that he was in no

ISN'T IT LOVELY?

The recollections that began with *Happy Times* continues with *Lee*

Indulging friends who insisted she write her memoirs, Radziwill came out with her first book *Happy Times* published by Assouline (assouline.com) in 2001, a visual celebration brimming with personal photographs, dedicated exclusively to the moments in life that brought her joy—because chronicling the distressing, controversial parts meant touching on sensitivities involving famous friends and families. Fast forward to November 2015 and her new book, *Lee*, also from Assouline, had just hit stands. In this new tome, she writes about her longing to live a life away from the spotlight, and outside of the shadows of her more famous sister. Still, she indulges with stories about the famous company she kept, Capote and Nureyev among them—for that is the world she moved around in—but this time she writes about how they have become touchstones to her intellectual and emotional maturity.



state to do anything, and I remember my mother screaming with joy, 'Hughdie, Hughdie, now you can give Jackie away.' During the wedding party I had to get him onto a plane back to New York. Accompanied by my first husband, also drunk. It was a nightmare.

"But we were talking about the Hamptons. It was so empty then, houses miles apart. We lived fairly near my aunt, Edie Beale, and I'd play with her daughter, Little Edie, even though she was quite a bit older. Grey Gardens was a beautiful house, but I lost touch when I married and lived in England. Later I had my own house in East Hampton, and went to visit them with Peter Beard. My God, you should have seen the place! And them! But they were sweet and funny and happily living in their own world. The original idea for the film was about my return to East Hampton after 30 years and to have my aunt Edith narrate my nostalgia and hers. So we phoned the Maysles brothers. Initially the Edies were against it, but the Maysles charmed them as they only worked with 16-millimeter cameras, and were finally allowed in . . . The remake is good. Have you seen it? . . . Listen, I booked a table at Voltaire. We should leave at, what, 8:15? Is that okay?"

The taxi swings into the Place de la Concorde. "You know, Paris—well, at least this part of it—has hardly changed since Jackie and I first came here in 1951. We were so young! It was the first time we felt really close, carefree together, high on the sheer joy of getting away from our mother, the deadly dinner parties of political bores, the Sunday lunches for the same people that lasted hours, Jackie and I not allowed to say a word. Not that we wanted to, except to a lovely man called James Forrestal, our secretary of defense, who had a bit of the culture we craved. Jackie's dream was France, but mine was really art and Italy, as that was all I cared about through school. My history of art teacher, who saved my life at Farmington, was obsessed with Bernard Berenson and I succumbed as well. My first discovery of him was when we were taken to visit the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, better known then as Fenway Court. Berenson had chosen all the most important paintings Isabella should buy. I had another life open.

"I wrote to Berenson at I Tatti, several letters; then out of the blue he replied, asking me to come and see him if I ever came to Italy. Well, that was it. I thought of nothing else. So after we were here, I went to Florence. Florence and Berenson and I Tatti! Imagine! Any artistic intellect I possess is due to that time. He took me under his wing, read to me, encouraged me to write. In fact he published a letter I wrote him. That was my proudest moment. I went back to I Tatti last summer. Though there was no B.B., and no Nicky Mariano, the atmosphere is still the same, though now there are maybe a hundred people there, great scholars-to-be of Renaissance art studying, learning, in those almost monk-like surroundings, eating at a beautiful long oak table. He was one of the most fascinating men I ever knew."

The doorman opens the taxi door. "*Bonsoir, Princesse.*" We go inside.

"*Madame!*"



"Madame la Princesse!"

"Princesse Radziwill, je suis ravi de vous voir!"

This fabulous *ancien régime* politeness to Lee, who has booked the table, and the taxi, and my hotel room, as Mme. Radziwill. One sees why she likes Paris.

"Believe me, when I used to come here with [Rudolf] Nureyev or Lenny Bernstein, there was none of that. I was a pimple beside their stature and genius. When I was young, I used to think that everyone should die at 70, but my closest friends, like Rudolf and Andy [Warhol], and to an extent [Truman] Capote, let alone most of my close family, didn't even reach that age. There is something to be said for being older, and memories. How could I ever forget Rudolf's funeral, here, at the Opera... the whole place swathed with deep red roses and draped in black, as well as the dancers and *les petits rats* descending the stairs. I've seen some extraordinary funerals in my life, Jack [Kennedy]'s of course. That had a different kind of sadness, a bleak, brutal, tragic end to hopes for a greater future and the buoyant few years of his presidency... the opening up of the White House to artists and musicians. I can't deny those few years were glamorous, being on the presidential yacht for the America's Cup races, the parties with the White House *en fête*. It was so ravishing. People think it was decorated by Sister Parish—well, a bit was—but really it was Stéphane Boudin of Jansen, who Jackie had met here in Paris. And, as well, Jack's charismatic charm and enthusiasm for life. I remember the first time Jackie asked Jack to Merrywood to pick her up for some dinner. You couldn't mention the word 'democrat' in my stepfather's house or even presence—nor in my father's for that matter—and I felt Jack was in for a rough ride. But he was a senator, so he already had a kind of authority as well as a dazzling personality. He won them over pretty quickly.

"My life could certainly have been different. Not so much because Jackie

married a Kennedy, but because he became president. If he'd lost the election, I'd have probably spent most of my life in England with Stas [Prince Stanislas "Stas" Radziwill], whom I adored, as did anyone who knew him, and our children, Anthony and Tina. We had this divine house on Buckingham Place behind the palace, and the prettiest country place in Oxfordshire—Turville Grange—that Mongiardino decorated. He glued the walls of the dining room with Sicilian scarves, and asked Lila di Nobili to paint each child with their favorite animals crisscrossed by bands of flowers. It was enchanting. Sadly Lila lacquered over them, so I couldn't take them when we left. To me, that's the essence of great design. It was a perfect Turgenev room... something simple and original that stays in the mind forever. Like I Tatti, and Nancy Lancaster's Ditchley Park, or Peter Beard's house in Montauk.

"But I wasn't always so pure in my taste. As a child, the person I admired most in the world was Lana Turner! She seemed the epitome of glamour, and her glitzy surroundings so enviable, the opposite of my mother's extremely banal taste. And of course no one had as much taste as Rudolf, vast 19th-century paintings of naked men on glowing velvet walls, Russian-Oriental fabrics and furs, all on a huge scale. He was so impressed with what Mongiardino did for me that he took him for himself and some of his ballets.

"We weren't taught anything like that as children. In fact, my childhood taught me nothing. Zero. I never saw a play with my mother until I was 14 and then it was *Hansel and Gretel*. My father, naturally, spoiled me when I was allowed to see him—flying to New York from Washington, alone, in those terrifying planes. He'd take me to Danny Kaye movies and rent a dog for me to walk in the park on Sunday—a different dog every Sunday—and then to have butterscotch sundaes with almonds at Schrafft's. My mother simply had me, sticking me with a series of horrible governesses. There was one particular beast called Aggie, whom I remember well. I hadn't a clue how

PHOTO COURTESY OF ASSOULINE. OPPOSITE, LEFT: RON GALELLA/GETTY IMAGES; RIGHT: PHOTOS, ASSOULINE



TITANS AND TYCOONS
Clockwise, from left: Aristotle Onassis, the Greek shipping magnate Lee was dating before it was announced he would marry her sister Jackie (*far left*); Lee's son, Prince Anthony Radziwill (pictured with first cousin John F. Kennedy Jr.), who died of cancer in 1999; with Italian fashion designer Giorgio Armani, with whom she would work for as publicist in 1986 after her bout with alcoholism. **Opposite:** With family and friends in Andy Warhol's 30-acre Church Estate in Montauk, East Hampton, Long Island.



UNFULFILLING YEARS LED LEE TO BOUTS OF DEEP DEPRESSION AND DIPS INTO ALCOHOLISM, BOTH BRAVELY DIVULGED AND ERADICATED.

to be a parent myself, and I expect I put Tina and Anthony through tough times. I find it hard to read people's minds, my own children's minds even harder. But it all worked out and I was blessed with two wonderful children. Anthony and I were wonderfully close in the years before he died, and my daughter, Tina, who leads the most original life, is coming to stay with me in Italy soon for four weeks . . . I say, it's awfully late, you must be exhausted and I know I am."

It's late in the evening and the apartment is dark now, with only a pool of silvery-pink light on the sofa as Lee walks me to the door, Zinnia bouncing between our feet.

"No, Zinny! Tomorrow! And you, too, tomorrow. Let's have breakfast at L'Avenue in the sunshine. Good night!" The door gently shuts, the elevator opens. All so easy, so civilized.

One can see why she likes Paris.

Half awake, I lie collecting thoughts, the bare facts, of the near-legend I have just left. Caroline Lee Bouvier, born in 1933 to John V. Bouvier III and Janet Lee, four years after her sister Jacqueline. Becomes stepdaughter of Hugh D. Auchincloss Jr.

Married:

- 1) 1953, Michael Canfield.
- 2) 1959, Prince Stanislas "Stas" Radziwill; two children, Anthony and Christina ("Tina").
- 3) 1988, Herbert Ross, film director.

Lives in the United States and France.

The lesser-known facts are the fodder of tabloids. Her duplicitous treatment by the whims of Aristotle Onassis. Her great friend Capote, insisting Lee should act, adapts "Laura" as a vehicle for her, but stage fright prevents her from pursuing a theatrical career. Her romances with the most attractive men of the time—among them the photographer Peter Beard and the architect Richard Meier, possibly even Mick Jagger. The last-minute calling off of her wedding to the San Francisco hotelier Newton Cope. Unfulfilling years—exacerbated by her sister's escalating ill health, their difficult relationship, and a certain amount of friction with her children—led Lee to bouts of deep depression and occasional dips into alcoholism, both bravely, the latter publicly, divulged and eradicated. Indeed, so much so that she was able to cope, resiliently, with the death of her nephew John F. Kennedy Jr., to whom

THE LEE THEY KNOW

SOFIA COPPOLA, FILMMAKER



I GOT TO KNOW LEE through Marc Jacobs when I was living in Paris. She helped him pick out beautiful linens and dishes when he was setting up his apartment. Lee knew all the best places to go, and they got beautiful tablecloths at D. Porthault and silver at Puiforcat. Of course, she has impeccable taste and knows how things should be done. My upbringing was crazy and fun, with 70s artists in Northern

California, not at all like the precise world Lee seems to live in, which I find so interesting. I love her classic and chic apartments with beautiful flowers and books and grown-up furniture. I love having lunch with Lee. Recently I met her, and she looked great in bright pink slim Céline trousers and a hat. I always wonder what she thinks of the world around her today, how different it must be to when she grew up. I think she likes me because I'm not really gaudy or ostentatious.

I love hearing stories of her life. My favorites are about when she and Truman Capote went on tour with the Rolling Stones and got caught in the middle of a drug bust. And I love hearing the glamorous love stories. She told me her greatest romance was with Peter Beard in Greece one summer, when he was teaching art to her niece and nephew. That ended her marriage, but how great to have that be your romantic summer fling?

Lee keeps everyone on their toes—you feel like you have to be your best with her. I remember having dinner with her, and she ordered a delicate plate of asparagus. I got a big bowl of spaghetti Bolognese, and she looked horrified.

I have a great memory of being on a boat in Corsica with Lee, and after a picnic of Corsican cheese and rosé she dove into the turquoise water and swam to a little island. She always looks chic, whether just out of the ocean, hair back, in a sleek one-piece or at dinner on vacation in white trousers.

I also love that she's so honest, doesn't tolerate phoniness, tells great stories, and always has perfect hair. I love the way she speaks. I don't know anyone else who phrases things the way she does. She once described a lunch with someone as, "Just truly a life-diminishing experience."

One of my most vivid memories of Lee is visiting her apartment in Paris with my young daughters for tea. Romy was four, and Lee gave her a plate of brownies and pastries. I was terrified of a hyper kid surrounded by cream furniture and toile, and Lee, in a perfectly calm voice and a smile, said to her, "Romy, I will just kill you if you get chocolate on my chair." They have been friends ever since.

PETER BEARD, PHOTOGRAPHER



I MET LEE WHEN I was visiting Jackie and Ari Onassis on Skorpios. Lee was the artistic one—the humorous, adventurous outsider on the inside. I was lucky to be there wherever we were: in Greece, France, Kenya, Montauk, Mustique, Barbados. Then, of course, there was Lily Pond Lane, where her crazy and fabulous Aunt Edie, and her cousin Little Edie, lived in hiding. Lee and I had the idea to do the documentary *Grey Gardens*. We began film-

ing it all with Jonas Mekas, the pet raccoons and the 52 very strange cats. Then we brought in the Maysles, who, at a regrettable turning point, took over the project; but my original footage—by far the most fabulous—remains to be seen.

Lee was always the one with high taste, humor and brains. We went on the Stones' "Exile on Main St." tour with our friend Truman Capote—and on some super side trips afterward. Back at Lee's Fifth Avenue pied-à-terre, we had visits from Andy Warhol, Richard Lindner, Larry Rivers, and Rudolf Nureyev. There were so many life-enhancing and extraordinary individuals. Lee was the key element. And talk about Lee's flair for brilliant surroundings: the door opened onto one of the seriously great Francis Bacon paintings, collected early in the 1950s, before Bacon was really known, and well before I actually introduced him to Lee (Bacon, by the way, thought she was great, too).

Bernard Berenson was a mentor during Lee's early life, and she liked to quote the advice that he gave her: to go for "whatever is life enhancing." And actually that sums up Lee Bouvier Radziwill—everything was life enhancing. A couple of years ago I spent a few weeks visiting her in a house she had taken in Monte Argentario, in Tuscany. I was delighted to see that Lee was still going for it.

she was extremely close, followed shockingly soon after by that of her son, Anthony, from a rare form of cancer.

These tragedies, compounded by earlier, unforgettably tragic memories, convinced Lee to make, if not a new life, a different one: one where the press is gentler; where her past, good or infamous, is not daily revisited; and where she can be surrounded by so many of the things she grew up with and learned to love about Europe. In 1974 she and Jackie published *One Special Summer*, a memoir of their European trip, written originally as a gift to their parents. In 2001 Lee wrote a second memoir, *Happy Times*, published by her friends, the Assoulines. It's an engaging picture of some of the most glorious moments in her vivid life. She says the best part was being hands-on in its production, discussing the layout, the typefaces, selecting photographs from among myriad images.

We meet, as she said we would, in the sunshine, at the chic cafe spitting distance from her building. Chairs are arranged for her, water, espresso and an ashtray brought without a word said.

"Well?" she says, "what's next?"

"Tell me about your marriages."

"Oh." Short now, taken aback, no low note and a long pause. "Okay, where shall we start?"

I say, "The first?" Another pause. "Michael Canfield? Okay. I was very young when we met, and he was so good-looking and clever. I wanted so badly to get away from my mother, and he seemed to offer everything: looks, privilege, friends, fun. His father was chairman of Harper & Brothers, so he led a very literary life and was a brilliant editor. I was deliriously happy for a while, moving to London, our house in Chester Square. But he drank seriously. He was very fragile. One day I couldn't open the front door; he was slumped, out cold, inside. He tried to stop, but nothing worked for any time. He said I was so in tune with life and he wasn't any longer. And besides, I had met Stas.

"Stas was divorcing at the time, and we fell in love and eventually we married. Those were glorious years. Being married to Stas was certainly the happiest part of my life, so he must have been the love of my life: there were other infatuations, other loves even, but never the joy or knowledge of life and living that I experienced with Stas. Jack and my sister would come over, staying in Buckingham Place rather than the embassy, and I'd be included in all the great events, dinners at Buckingham Palace, you know. And the trip to India. The best part of that was meeting Nehru. He was seductive, mentally rather than physically, not unlike Berenson, and so beautiful, and with the most exquisite soft golden skin. We stayed in his house and he showed us to our rooms every night, showing us the books we should read, which made one feel completely at home.

"Stas and I went to Washington often, and then . . ." Her voice trails off as she stares into the sun, perhaps considering the end of her marriage to Stas. "More coffee? Well, there was Jack's death and, and . . ." Ari. Listen, I think the world knows more about all that than I do. He was dynamic, irrational, cruel I suppose, but fascinating. He also had the most beautiful skin, and smelled wonderful. Naturally, I mean. Fascinating . . . as my sister discovered!"

"And Herbert Ross?"

"Oh no, do we have to talk about that? Okay, he was certainly different from anybody else I'd been involved with, and the film world sounded exciting. Well, it wasn't. I hated Hollywood, and the provincialism of the industry. Herbert had been married to the ballerina Nora Kaye until she died, and unbeknownst to me was still obsessed with her. It was, 'Nora said this, Nora did it like that, Nora liked brown and orange.' If anybody even breathed her name, Herbert would burst into tears. I had to clench my fists every time and was deeply hurt as I thought I had created a wonderful life for him. Thank God we never really settled in Los Angeles. My New York was difficult for Herbert, so we parted. Now, no more on husbands!"

"Then let's go back to the president's assassination," I say. "Do you remember where you were?"

Lee pauses. "As if yesterday. It was in the evening, in London. Stas came running up the stairs, his voice and face in shock. I started crying . . . uncontrollably. For hours. Finally he said, 'Lee, you have to get ahold of yourself, and I stopped suddenly. It was the last time I have ever cried. I've never cried since, never. Anthony's death was equally soul destroying, but with an illness,

"JACK KENNEDY'S DEATH WAS THE LAST TIME I'VE EVER CRIED. I'VE NEVER CRIED SINCE, NEVER. WHEN ANTHONY DIED, I WAS ALREADY CRIED OUT."



it's so distressing. Coupled with his bravery throughout it. I could only cry inner tears. When he died, I was already cried out. And I certainly wouldn't cry about myself, or my life. In some funny way I'm lucky that there was so much more interest in my sister. Which, of course, I understand. I enjoy reading about real celebrities even now, and Jackie certainly qualified in that league. Of course, when you are closely related to someone so in the public eye, you tend to think the interest is dumb or trivial because you know the person, and the truth. But I certainly understand people's fascination. After all, as the young wife of the youngest elected president, she was fascinating.

"As to that interest in her spilling over into my life? Well, at times it was annoying, at times funny. Perhaps the most depressing part was that whatever I did, or tried to do, got disproportionate coverage purely because of Jackie being my sister. But you learn to deal with the scrutiny, even the lies, as long as it's not malicious.

"Regrets? I think everyone has regrets, and people who say they haven't are either liars or narcissists. There have been many things in my life to have regrets about, in the sense I wish I could have changed them, or somehow made them not happen. What I don't have is envy. I'm perfectly content at this time of my life. I've done so many fascinating things and the greatest joy is that I continue to do interesting things and meet fascinating people. Working for Diana Vreeland at *Harper's Bazaar* was a great learning curve. Working in P.R. for Giorgio Armani taught me a lot about that particular—

SHE'S THE ONE

"She's a delicate but durable athlete, a water creature, an Ondine," Capote once wrote of Lee. "To watch her swimming in Caribbean waters, or to see her sweeping in water skis across the sea's horizon, is the most excellent experience." **Inset:** An illustrated 1994 letter from Lee's ex-boyfriend, the Kenya-based wildlife photographer Peter Beard, who describes her as "the one with the high taste, humor and brains."

I almost said 'peculiar'—industry. And I met my dearest friend, Hamilton South, while there.

"Really, the most fulfilling roles have been my friendships—Berenson, Nureyev, Peter, even Andy Warhol because he was so wildly different—then, and now Bernard-Henri Lévy and his wife, Arielle Dombasle, and Giam-battista Valli, and Diego Della Valle, who are all angelic to me.

"Am I melancholy by nature? Less so now, and I certainly don't bounce out to parties and talk all night. One can't help but be a bit melancholy when you see how the world has changed, and I don't mean that nostalgically. Every day one is confronted by words and visions of human misery. You would have to have a heart of ice not to be a bit melancholy. I've been happy, and am happy now. My life has been exciting, active, changeable. At my age, one is lucky to have old friends, and, fortunately, most of them, like me, can't seriously work a computer and the phone is our link. So I'm not lonely. I have this apartment, this view, my bursting-with-light New York apartment—yes, and you, Zinny—this '*douceur de vivre*,' this city."

One can see why Paris loves Lee. ■



Once a booming industry that welcomed patrons with legs wide open, Burgos is now facing slow but certain decline. As its surroundings get caught in the wave of gentrification and sky-high rates, **Paolo Enrico Melendez** revisits the last of the city's red light districts and finds its occupants on the fence about keeping the neighborhood's neon signs ablaze or embracing its renewal



THE DISTRICT SLEEPS ALONE TONIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ARTU NEPOMUCENO

In military jargon, a bulge on the battlefield is called a salient. It can form for a number of reasons: hesitation in retreat, an overzealousness in advance. Regardless of cause, a salient is exposed on multiple sides, and constitutes the weakest point in defense.

In the gentrification of Barangay Poblacion in Makati, Burgos Street is the salient. To claim so is neither journo melodrama nor political hyperbole, because in combat as in the ejection of residents by the forces of market, the stakes are high and the interests diametrically opposed. Like any battleground, the area holds a preponderance of ironies: wholesale consumption right beside a Catholic church, places of leisure and escape in full view of a school, a classy ballet studio a couple of brisés from the seedy go-go clubs. As somebody who grew up cruising that street in his school bus, on his way to a conservative elementary school nearby, even I read the way P. Burgos is being erased from the larger Poblacion narrative as its own form of violence.

Burgos Street is situated in the southeast part of Poblacion, a barangay quartered by two of Makati's most important roads: Kalayaan, once known as Imelda Avenue, and Makati Avenue, which links the barangay to the central business district. Burgos first became a haven for girlie bars after the Ermita crackdown of the 80s. From an empty street, the place slowly became the playground of suits on expense accounts and, as business boomed, travelers on sex tours.

Proximity to the country's commercial heart, and the recent development of Rockwell Center nearby, has propelled Poblacion to a new level of cultural prominence. In the area are authentic Mexican and Thai restaurants, hangouts that serve exotic curries and strange teas. There isn't a hip lifestyle blogger who doesn't mention Poblacion at least twice in a listicle of five.

Except Burgos. These days, nobody brings up Burgos. You have to remind people that the street is there.

"THERE WAS HARDLY anything on Burgos," begins Henry Strzalkowski, bit actor and marketing manager of H&J, a bar just off the red light main drag, on the corner of Felipe Street.

A mestizo in a black quarter-sleeved shirt, Strzalkowski holds the fort as the rest of the H&J staff hurry about in the thickening Friday night crowd. He recalls with smooth accent and rolling cadence that as a theater arts student, a night out was all about billiards and barmaids. After Ermita's cleanup, bars began to open in Burgos, where the expats were plentiful and the regulators more chill. These new bars joined old-timer restaurants such as Danish Connection and La Tienda. It was around this time that Strzalkowski began

coming to Burgos more frequently, to a place called The Cathouse.

"I also liked Heckle and Jeckle, which opened in the late 90s, because they had Wild Turkey," he says with a laugh. Soon after becoming a regular, he was invited to join the staff. The bar changed its name to H&J, and became the first hangout in the late 90s that brought in a satellite dish, so that patrons could enjoy live football games, particularly in the English Premiere League.

"Bars in the area had show bands, but we began to feature rock and blues, which the expats liked," Strzalkowski says. H&J brought in bands from all over the metro, such as The Jerks, The Blue Rats, and Wally Gonzales's Bandwagon. Nowadays, the bar features DJs that play hip-hop and soul.

This pulse on what's popular has allowed the bar to grow organically, particularly after moving to its new location. "It's inevitable," Strzalkowski says of the development. "And it's not just us. There are more bars. There are tearooms. Coffee shops. High-end restaurants. The market has really grown, and not just the one that caters to the expat section. It's all great for business."

Strzalkowski agrees that Burgos is in a chokehold. "The girlie bar owners I've spoken to say the same thing: business is slowing." The seedy part of the area is not yet on its death throes, he clarifies. But it is certainly not as vibrant as it was as recent as 10 years ago, which is a blip in the timeline of a market.

"It's not what people want anymore," Strzalkowski says. He notes the various scams: the fake Rolexes peddled to expats, the forcing of drinks a



PACIFIC RING

Top: A midget awaits the start of a fight inside Ringside, a bar whose main attraction has been midget boxing and lady boxing shows (left) for close to a decade. Its popularity among tourists and expats increased after author Rafe Bartholomew wrote about midget boxing in his 2010 book, *Pacific Rims*.

Opposite, from top: The facade of Moulin Rouge, one of the first bars in P. Burgos; roaming the red light stretch on a Saturday night; downtime for Ringside's entertainment boxers.





**"Midget wrestling!"
"Pretty go-go girls!"
"Beware of ladyboys."**

**It's a place where
you can't even quote
the signs around you
without offending
some prude.**





customer hasn't even ordered, an overall pushiness in a commercial atmosphere that relies on aspiration rather than hard sell. On my walk to H&J, I spied a local pushing a stun baton on a tourist by the sidewalk. The vendor had a hand on the tourist's shoulder, at once reassuring and insistent. The tourist looked lost. It wasn't so much transaction as exploitation, a dynamic that would soon be reversed once that tourist finished his pre-party drink and entered one of the girlie bars. "People want to feel like they belong," Strzalkowski says, after I tell him about what I had seen.

RESIDENT AND LESSOR Genie Peralta has directly profited from Poblacion's boom. Her family currently rents out the front-most area of their apartment complex to the yakitori hangout Tambai. "The Tambai guys spent a year trying to convince my mother to let them rent the place. Now they're famous, and my family has extra income."

Peralta's childhood was spent in the streets of Poblacion. "*Patintero, habulan*, the works." The area now occupied by H&J was once a clothing factory called Narda's, the petite hotel sales professional tells me. It was the only business there in Felipe. As soon as Narda's closed for the day, the street was back to being residential. "We would stay out as late as we could and there was never a problem," Peralta says, in a voice that sounds like it would still fit in in a round of *patintero* with friends.

Burgos was a common topic. Even as a kid, Peralta knew what the place was about. "We would even have tenants whom we knew to work in the bars. But they were never a problem. They kept their places clean, paid rent on time, were polite."

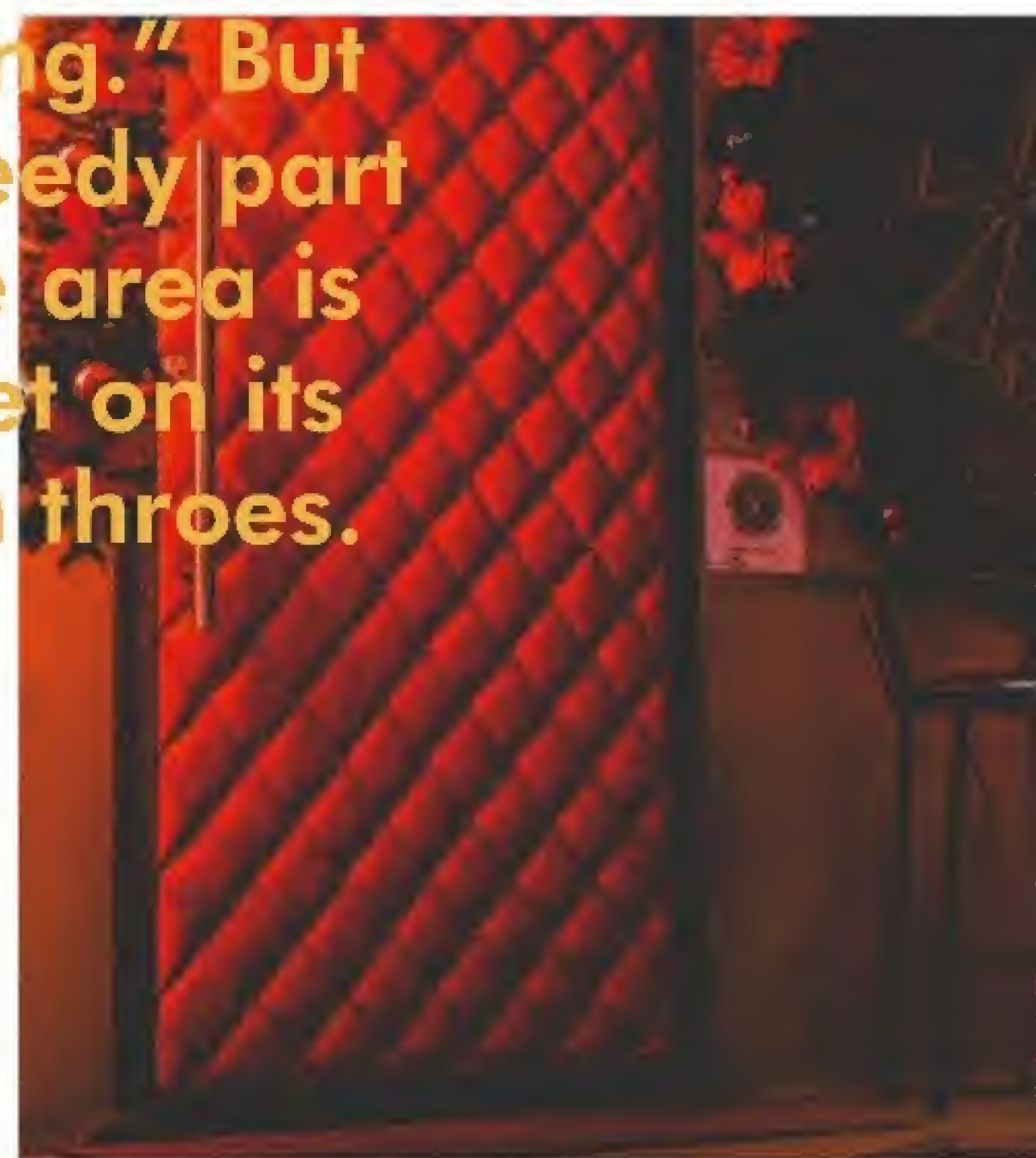
These days, however, Peralta tells me the neighborhood feels nothing like it used to. Now only one of three residential properties, their house is besieged nightly by crowds out to eat and drink. Once, her car got keyed. Trash, noise, and vomit are regular nuisances. Her young nieces and nephews are so used to living in the vicinity of a bar that covering their noses is a reflexive habit once outdoors. And on pest control days, rodents would flee the establishments only to die inside the Peralta apartment compound.

Patrons also ignore concrete blocks that designate parking for residents, and signs asking bar customers to leave driveways open are downright useless. Even the watch-your-car boys are from a different neighborhood. During a particularly busy event, Peralta had to make a couple of circuits around her street to look for a place to park. Drunk foreigners pelted her car with chewing gum the entire time. "Why are you passing here?" they shouted. "I live here!" Peralta shouted back. It's the kind of scene only the most heavy-handed of satirists would use outside of non-fiction.

Imagine going through all this without having a channel to air grievances, and you pretty much have an idea what it's like to be a resident in the southeast quarter of Poblacion. "The businesses will say they have a barangay permit to operate. And you have to be civil towards the patrons, because they're strangers, and they have no sense of community with the place," she says. She then tells of patrons who would fight with the more confrontational residents. "The only time I feel like I'm home again is when the bars and restaurants are closed for Holy Week."

Renting the whole place out, out of exasperation, is a regular topic over meals among the Peralta family. But they never push through with the idea. "This is where my dad grew up, and he's gone now," she says. "And we want our nieces and nephews to be able to say, 'This is *lola's* house.'"

"The girlie bar owners I've spoken to say the same thing: business is slowing." But the seedy part of the area is not yet on its death throes.



"PAGKAIN AT PARLOR!" exclaims Maribel Legarda, artistic director for the Philippine Educational Theater Association, when asked what she associates Burgos Street with.

The stage veteran and *Rak of Aegis* director says the red light area has always been there but has never really been talked about. "We always knew the main streets as food routes, and the place to go if you were a young girl and needed a parlor for parties and graduations and such," she adds in a voice evidently comfortable in the role of storyteller.

Legarda admits she doesn't consider the red light area altogether negative, because it gives character to the community. She remembers working late at Makati Avenue computer shops, surrounded by girls having virtual sex with clients. "When I was working in an ad agency way back, the office van would drop me off at Burgos at two in the morning." She would walk home just as the girls left their bars. "That's the time they would be truly public. They would be loud and rude and would have more energy than me. But we were all just working girls on our way home."

To Legarda, the key factor in Poblacion's rapid development is Rockwell Center. "Everyone is now basking in Rockwell glory," she says. In her quadrant of Poblacion, the northeast side, one can score expensive designer bags from Bacolod, hold video shoots at a modern studio, buy groceries at a Korean-run store. "It's made the community even more colorful," she says. "There's all forms of pretense and truth."

Legarda also tells of one weekday at home, overhearing from her window a teacher screaming abuse at kids in a school nearby. "I'm watching this drama right across my room, and I'm thinking, you can't really fully corporatize



LIFE IN NEON

P. Burgos is slowly being inched out of the Poblacion area narrative. Still, there is never any strip in the city more alive as soon as evening starts. Those inclined can choose among its many go-go bars—Bottoms, Plan B, Girls Lounge—or opt to negotiate directly with the streetwalkers outside.



this place. *Kabit anong gawin ninyo, Barangay Poblacion pa rin tayo*,” she says, referring to Rockwell and the kind of practice that seeks to completely wash off the grit from the area.

Legarda however agrees that there’s little to no good planning for how Poblacion is developing. “Just like the tragedy that was Manila,” she notes. What most ruins her sense of place, as an artist in residence as it were, isn’t so much the new claustrophobia as it is the loss of progeny. “Now Poblacion feels the same as other places, and that’s corny for an artist. *Pare-pareho na tayo*.”

“And rents are terrible!” she continues, sharing figures which are three or four times the going rate in locations as good or even better than Poblacion’s elsewhere in the metro. “If I were rich, I’d buy my place. So I’m cool that this is all here, but at the same time, I can’t help but ask myself, which will win out? *Komersyo o tabanan?*”

WHAT TO MAKE of Burgos Street then and its environs? This site of clean fun that has turned out to be damaging, of exploitative practices which happen to be beneficial to the immediate community? I took a total of four trips to the place for this piece. Walking up and down the street on my last night, I realized that as a local man, I could loiter for the whole night and not be bothered. I started following foreigners around; every single doorman and lady and vendor called out to them and completely ignored me. I felt like one of those guys in that recent vampire parody, unable to enter a nightclub because no one would invite them in.

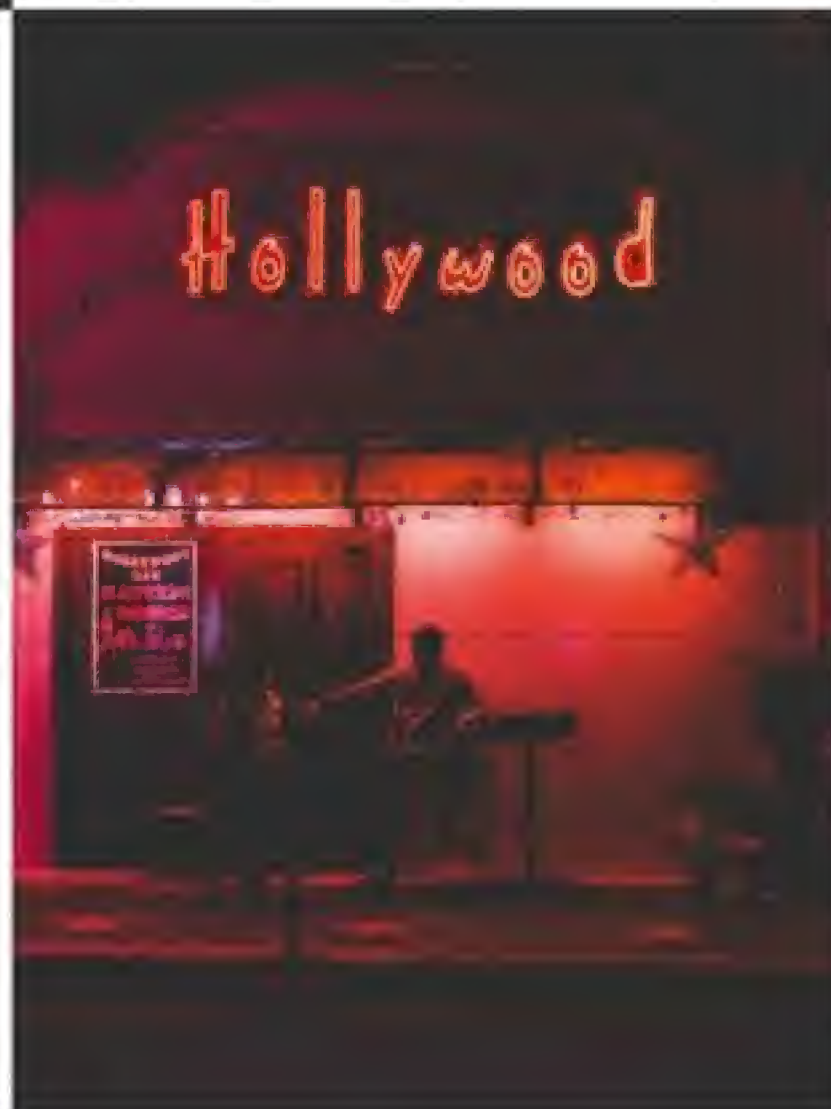
Half an hour and five laps later, I finally bolted into a random bar. To say that I was greeted coldly would be an understatement. I was given three drinks, because apparently around here two lady companions is the minimum requirement for an ego out to party. The women looked like they’d much rather be with a client loaded with dollars rather than pesos. I finished my drinks in under a couple of Survivor songs. I walked out and went for some ice cream.

I couldn’t bring myself to resent the place though. Business is business. And besides, I have a soft spot for places that resent the wholesome. “Midget wrestling!” “Pretty go-go girls!” “Beware of ladyboys.” It’s a place where you can’t even quote the signs around you without offending some prude. And for that exact reason, it’s a place that can’t last.

Legarda is philosophical about where Burgos is headed. “In the end, maybe we lose what was once originally here. But that happens everywhere, too; it won’t be unique to Burgos. What’s important is how you process the change. You can be someone who’s here, but not really get it. But if you’re critical, and keep something based on your reflections, then that will make the difference.”

Peralta is likewise reflective. What’s truly seedy, she thinks, is the regulators rather than the bars—the ones who fail to establish oversight, the ones who pass on the risks wholly on the residents, the ones who throw the community under a bus that seems to be speeding without much thought to either its load or bearing.

At one point in her recollection of childhood spent in the area around Burgos Street, Peralta suddenly remembers the one thing she no longer experiences as a resident. “The birds! I no longer hear birds sing in the morning!” A ubiquitous thing in any other residential environ, reduced to an afterthought: it took Peralta half an hour to give that answer. She had been too busy talking about trash and vomit, fights and abuse, the general feeling of being a stranger in one’s own neighborhood. ■



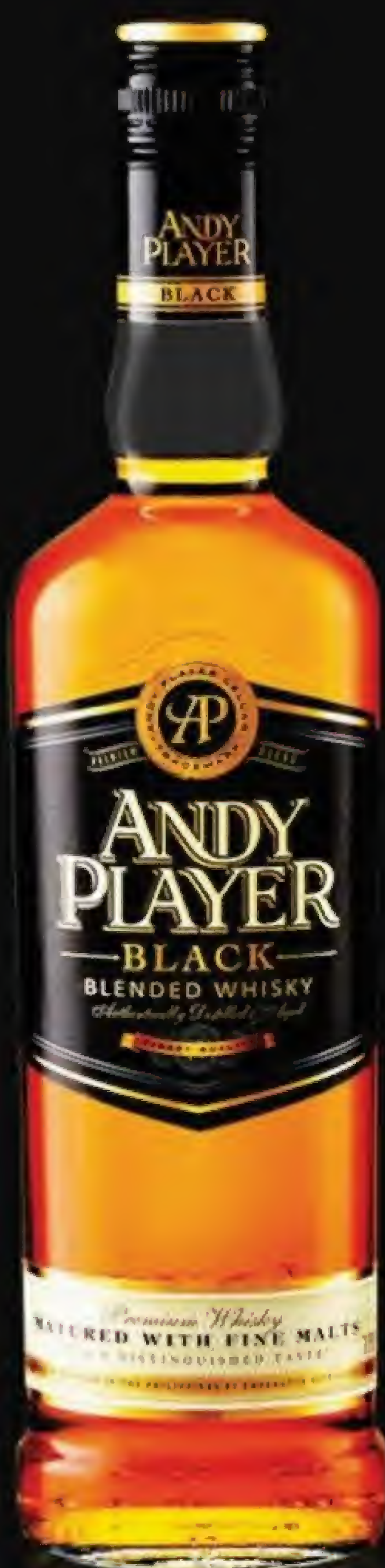
DECEMBER 2015-JANUARY 2016 / ISSUE 94

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HAVEN'T WE MET?

Andy Player Whisky's distinct build and flavor is the perfect drink for any blend-savvy partygoer



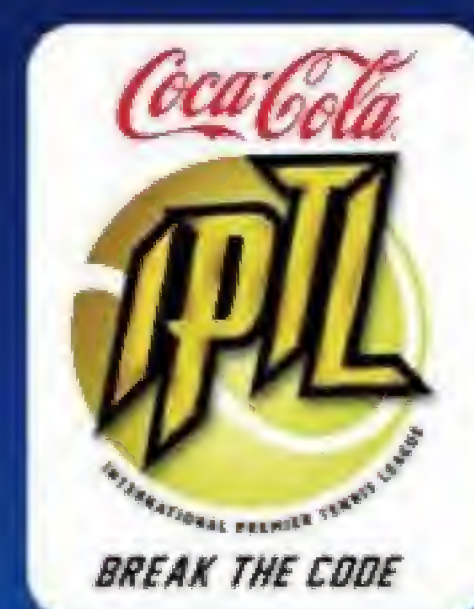
The past few years have seen more people becoming acquainted with the factors and elements that make a good whiskey. Put away the beer and set aside the shot glasses—whiskey is now the go-to drink for drinking sessions with the *barkada*. Andy Player is poised to establish and cultivate a strong whiskey drinking culture here in the Philippines. And though the blend is still making its mark on the drinking scene, its complex taste and rich aroma distinguish it from all others on the market right now.

Andy Player's unique flavor profile—one that includes dried berries, maple syrup, orange marmalade, and a subtle vanilla touch—allows it to be enjoyed neat. It can be taken on the rocks—with around two to three ice cubes—without sacrificing its rich, full taste. However, those who want a little thrill can test Andy Player's versatility by mixing it with other beverages. For those who prefer a sweeter aftertaste, Andy Player can be mixed with a simple cola. For those who like their liquor laced with a caffeine kick, it can make an excellent coffee cocktail. Even citrusy sodas go well with its build and flavor.

Whatever your fancy might be, Andy Player has been designed and blended to adjust itself to your preferences while staying true to its best virtues, such as its boldness and smoothness. And with actress Coleen Garcia there to show to the ropes on Andy Player's official website (haveyoumetandy.com), it shouldn't be hard to find the whiskey blend that perfectly fits your tastes.

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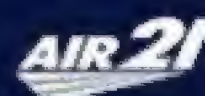
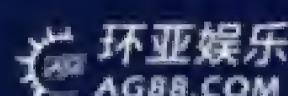


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RISING SUN SEASON

Cebu Pacific, set to launch a new direct flight from Manila to Fukuoka this December, is exposing Filipinos to the finer, lesser known aspects of Japanese culture

Perhaps the most ubiquitous symbol of Japan's natural beauty is the cherry blossom. The Sakura Festival, from March to April, is a brief season, but by beginning your tour in Fukuoka city, you can watch the cherry blossoms for a longer period, as its blooming begins on the island of Kyushu. For those looking to catch the

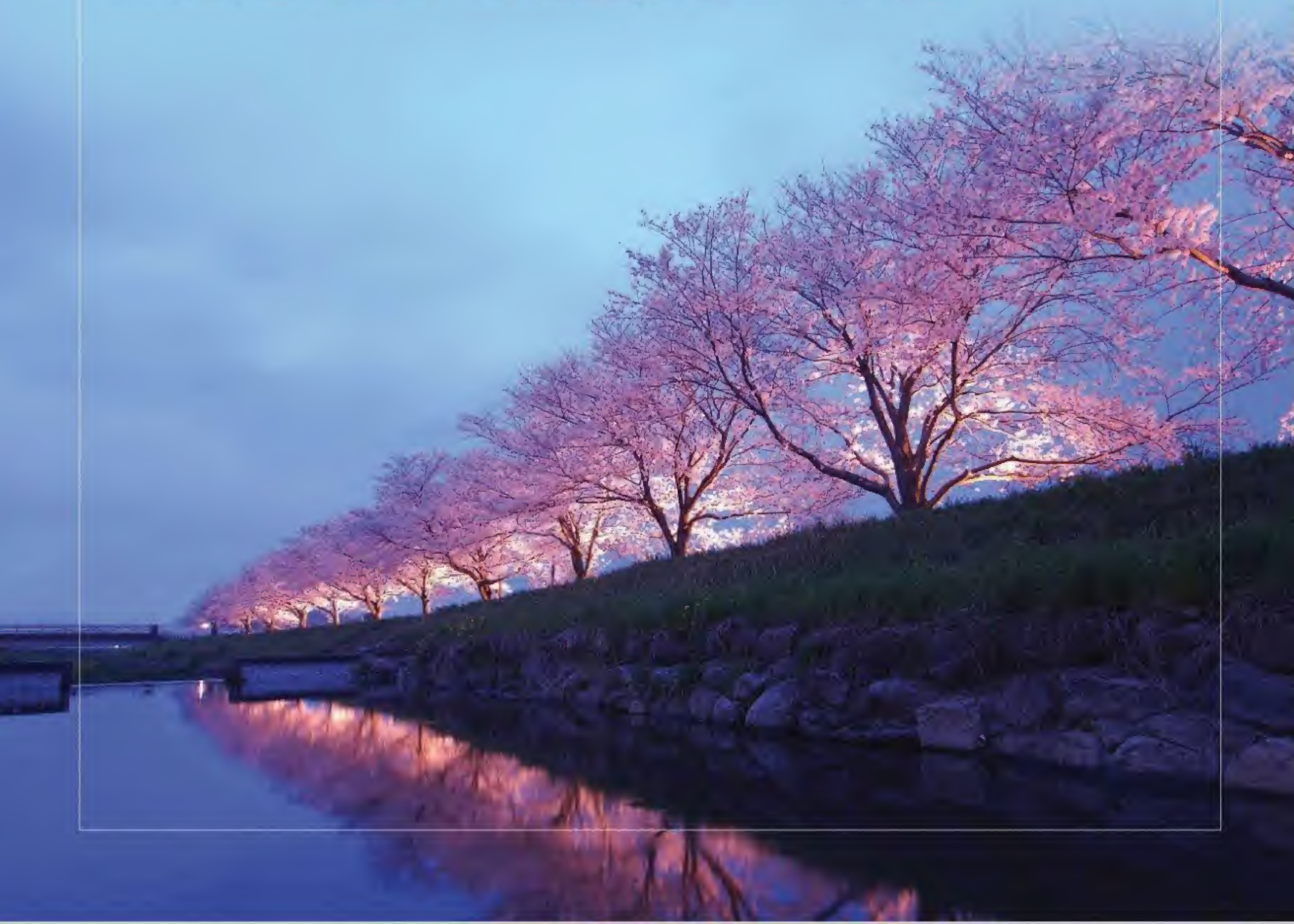
start of cherry blossom season, Cebu Pacific (cebupacificair.com) will be offering their new Fukuoka route starting December 17, which allows you to take a direct flight to Kyushu's most populous and culturally rich city.

Fukuoka, aside from being the liveliest and busiest city on the island, is also a cradle of historical and cultural landmarks best visited during the sakura season, including the Fukuoka Castle Ruins, Fukuoka Art Museum, and the Hakata Machiya Furusato-kan Museum. The city boasts of its Kagomma Furusato Yatai-mura food stalls that offer local dishes like Hakata Ramen, Mentaiko, Motsunabe, and Tetsunabe Gyoza. Like Tokyo and other urbanized Japanese cities, Fukuoka is made easily navigable thanks largely to its train stations and bus lines strategically positioned in key parts of the city.

The comprehensive transportation system and the strategic geographical location allow

tourists to experience the finer aspects of Kyushu culture, both within and beyond the city of Fukuoka, from its historical sites to its urban structures, as well as elements that highlight the clear advantages of seaside living, such as hot springs, the rural beaches of Nokonoshima and Shikanoshima, and the shallow waters of Aoshima beach in Miyazaki. If during your trip you feel the need to escape the city's urban sprawl, the Kumamoto Prefecture is an hour and a half away from Fukuoka, featuring hills and plains best visited during the summer season.

Though Tokyo and Osaka remain, for now, the go-to Japanese cities for the eager traveler, Fukuoka is quickly establishing itself as one of Japan's finest destinations. And with airlines like Cebu Pacific granting us access to these lesser known pockets of Japan, things are only looking up, both for tourism culture and for the ways we live through travel.



THE ROGUE ARENA

Promotions and relevant items, direct from our partners



BONDED BY BEER

In partnership with the German Club Manila and San Miguel Brewery, Inc., Sofitel held this country's liveliest Oktoberfest yet

Good conversations with friends start with a few sips of beer. Some nights it only takes a bottle or two, but nights like during the Oktoberfest require multiple kegs. At the 77th Oktoberfest on October 16 and 17 at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila (sofitelmanila.com), held in partnership with the German Club Manila, kegs and mugs of San Miguel beer were served, strengthening the bond between Philippine and German culture.

The sweeping Sofitel Garden Tent turned into

a rustic German biergarten (beer garden) that housed over 4,000 guests, including Pasay City Mayor Antonio G. Calixto, German Ambassador Thomas Ossowski, German Club Manila President Claus Sudhoff, and Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila General Manager Adam Laker. For two rambunctious nights, the event overflowed with beer and included an authentic Bavarian feast comprised of delectable dishes like sauerkraut, goulashsuppe, pork schnitzel, and apfelstrudel. Yet this year's Oktoberfest was not just a gastronomic experience but a cultural affair as well. With ladies donning the traditional *dirndl* dress and gentlemen in lederhosen dancing with unflagging energy to two of the best-loved Oktoberfest tunes, Ein Prosit and Fliegerlied, the German-Filipino crowd enjoyed two rollicking nights of genuine German entertainment courtesy

of the Munich Sound Express.

Although the two days are far from the 16 days of celebration in Germany, the Oktoberfest in Manila gave the Filipino crowd a glimpse of German traditions. This rendition of Oktoberfest prides itself on being the only authentic German beer festival in the country. Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila general manager assures that this tradition will continue in partnership with the German Club Manila: "This much-awaited annual event continues to promote camaraderie in the international community and we are happy to serve as the venue for this to be possible. Our friends can expect more excitement and entertainment in the next Oktoberfest." Germany and the Philippines may be miles apart, but Oktoberfest will always bring the two cultures together.

December 2015-January 2016

SHOP LIST

Where to buy the products featured in this issue



THE HEART WANTS WHAT IT WANTS. PAGE 90

PAGE 91

Joseph Double Cashmere Lisa Longcoat; SM Aura Premier, 26th Street cor. McKinley Parkway and C5, Bonifacio Global City; 887-0188. **Float** Swimsuit; floatswimwear.com.

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Bea Samson Wool Sleeveless Turtleneck; SOMA Stores, Green Sun, Chino Roces Ave. Ext., Makati; 548-9200. **Karen Millen** Knitted Cardigan; Bonifacio High Street Central Space Swg-104, G/F Southwest Building, Taguig; 847-9442.

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Float Deep V Swimsuit; floatswimwear.com.

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Joseph Asymmetric Sweater; SM Aura Premier, 26th Street cor. McKinley Parkway and C5, Bonifacio Global City; 887-0188. **Charles & Keith** Slip-On Flats; 2/F Phase 2, Greenbelt 5, Esperanza Street, Ayala Center, Makati; 729-9521.

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Joseph Soft Leather Sleeveless Top; SM Aura Premier, 26th Street cor. McKinley Parkway and C5, Bonifacio Global City; 887-0188. **Cameo** Little Love Shorts; shoplcp.com. **Charles & Keith** Two-Strap Sandals; 2/F Phase 2, Greenbelt 5, Esperanza Street, Ayala Center, Makati; 729-9521.

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Finders Keepers Sweet Talker Dress; shoplcp.com.

MOOD INDIGO. PAGE 37

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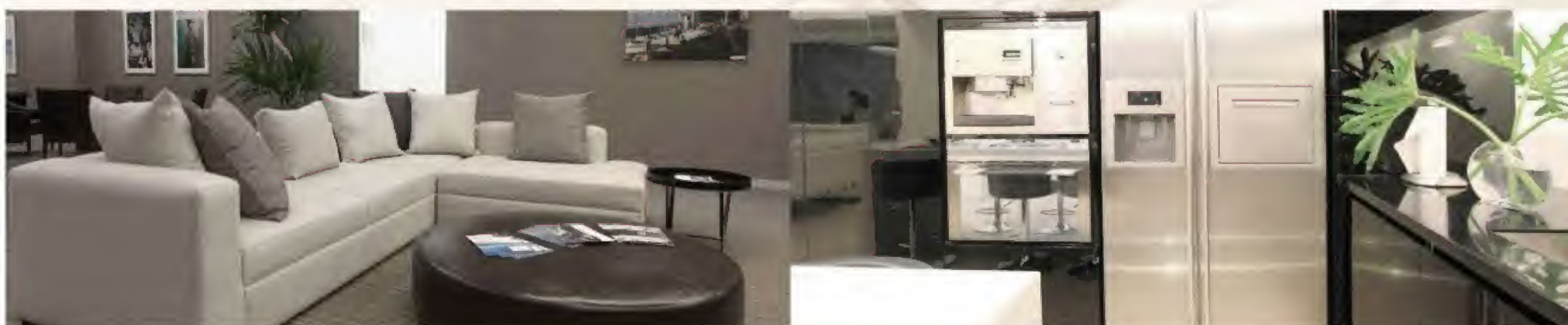
Crate and Barrel 4th Floor, SM Megamall Bldg. D Fashion Hall, EDSA Cor. Julia Vargas Ave, Mandaluyong; 3/F SM Aura, McKinley Parkway, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; crateandbarrel.com. **Triboia Bay** Living G/F LRI Design Plaza, Nicanor Garcia St., Bel Air- II, Makati; 4/F Mega Fashion Hall, SM Megamall, EDSA, Mandaluyong; 531-5420.

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December 2015-January 2016

FAMOUS ROGUE



A 21-year-old Louie Ysmael waiting to board a flight to Copenhagen at the Geneva Airport bar with Mark Rocas and Prince Pichai of Thailand, 1969.

LOUIE YSMAEL, nightlife impresario

IF NEW YORK had Steve Rubell of Studio 54, Manila's own party scene was set ablaze by Louie Ysmael. The son of high-caliber couple Chona Kasten and Johnny Ysmael, Louie was brought into the world groomed almost by default to live amongst the jet set. His taste for the highballing nightlife began in 1970s New York, followed by blithe adventures through Europe's most exclusive clubs, going from Paris and Switzerland to a small island in the Spanish Balearics, before the world came to know it as Ibiza. Bong Daza will remember the evening in '77 when they found a rowdy group of men occupying their regular table at a Paris club, Prive, and subsequently had them transferred by the maître d'—only later finding out that they were the Rolling Stones. Then, when the hedonism of the West began to lose steam, Louie headed home, where he translated his own experiences into a string of clubs that dominated the 80s and drew in Manila's nightowls like moths to a neon light: Stargazer, where the era's most

popular dance hits were played first; Louie Y's, mentioned in *Time* magazine as Asia's prime after-hours destination; Euphoria, which ushered in a new generation of partygoers when children of old patrons came brandishing their parents' membership cards; and the multiple incarnations of Venezia, which ensured his legacy as a cross-generational club pioneer. Unbelievably well connected, he entertained international royalty, foreign celebrities, Manila's high rollers and its most beautiful women. And though he has since mellowed out—owing to two shootouts and the earned above-it-all attitude of a grizzled party veteran who's lived through the shift from disco to techno, cocaine to ecstasy—his impact still reverberates today: in the clink of a martini glass, on a bass-thumping dancefloor, in the slurs of a drunken heckler. Every bar in Manila today exists because of Louie Ysmael, and owes the man a salute by way of a raised glass to the life lived after dark.

"It's all fun and games until someone gets killed."

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